

OMAR KHAYYAM

Faithfully and Literally translated (from the Original Persian)

BY

JOHN POLLÉN, LL.D., C.I.E.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

HIS HIGHNESS AGA KHAN,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., LL.D. (Camb.)

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LIFE CANNOT CEASE
AND
LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

LIFE CANNOT CEASE
AND
LEAVES FROM
THE PILGRIMS' WAY

BY

Lucy MARGUERITE PERCY Pearce

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LIFE CANNOT CEASE

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

AMIDST a mighty range of snow-clad mountains
A hidden valley lieth, deep and fair;
Fruitfully watered by the crystal fountains
Flowing from heights which cleave ethereal air
As if to reach an element more rare,
Whose pinnacles like alabaster shine,
Half veiled within the light they seem to share
With spheres of substance yet more clear and fine,
Hence living radiance flows through earth's remotest
shrine.

*Where every colour merges into one
White radiance, one vast glory which unfolds
Itself in all things, their indwelling Sun,
The life of all a universe, That holds
The worlds in close relationship, and moulds
All creatures to the type designed for each;
One Life which dwells within yet still enfolds,
By interaction of the twain to teach
A higher power of Light that every star shall reach.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

3

A mantle wov'n of every perfect treasure
Wrought by the ages' growth, this Vale doth wear,
Nature's best gifts expended without measure
Have made its aspect so exceeding fair
That Beauty's self doth seem enshrinèd there;
That thence o'er all the earth its power may shine,
Irradiant thus for every heart to share,
That through the Guardians of its peace divine
The living Light may flow far from this mountain shrine.

Beneath those mighty chasms and snowy peaks,
Where heat and cold in temperate warmth are blent,
No clamour cometh—only silence speaks
Truths inexpressible, diversely bent
Down into mighty thoughts, their power thus lent
To be the life of this material sphere,
So that the plastic forms wherin 'tis pent
Through Nature's living statuary make clear
As much of Truth as may in earthly guise appear.

Among the heights and in the valley dwell
Beings inblended with its harmony,
The children of its peace, whose voices tell
The rapture of their mutual sympathy—
The spirit of the place, serene and free.
In clear, sweet tones across the sunlit spaces
Calling, they weave of words pure minstrelsy,
The languages of many tribes and races
Commingling in the speech that fills those heavenly places.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

6

None dwell^{*} there prisoned by encircling walls,
But every spot lies open to the breeze
Which echoeth each voice that softly calls
From heart to heart across the weary seas,
Bearing above the world th' ethereal keys
Of realms not subject to the bounds of space,
While distance fetters not—e'en sometimes frees.
And in that valley but the tender grace
Of screening leaves may shelter each unveiled face.

7

For every being, man and bird and beast—
Yea, every creature living—shares that bond
Which utmost freedom is; greatest to least,
Each dweller in the vale—ay and beyond
Among the silent mountains—can respond
With thought to thought, surer than any speech
Through which divided minds may correspond,
For, in love's light unclouded, each to each
With thought's diviner swiftness thus at will can reach.

8

For there each heart is “ from itself at leisure ”
Thus making true its own pure melody,
And mutual, individual pain and pleasure
Have trembled into joyous harmony;
Ay, not in unison its notes agree,
But every being's individual tone
Finds in the whole concordant minstrelsy—
There only—the completion of its own,—
In music-breathing Space, with universes strown.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

9

For there the Living Puzzle of man's life

In human shape,—that some vast picture seems,
Cut into myriad pieces set at strife,

Made whole once more but in elysian dreams,—

Hath found its archetype, whose life yet streams
On every fragment, for its neighbours' light;

Looking to them, it joins their broken gleams
And finds its own place, fits itself aright
With their shapes;—thus at last earth's lonely souls unite

10

A child there was once in the valley born,

Of royal lineage,—destined to a crown
More glorious than his fathers ere had worn,

Though not, like them, through popular renown,
For Fate seemed darkly on his way to frown,
Leading him by strange paths; yet only when

His fair young life seemed to the grave gone down
His work shone forth revealed to human ken,
And gave him deathless empire in the hearts of men.

11

Truly, from birth Ananda seemed as one

Born to redeem a nation's destinies,
Great Neptune's nursling, god-child of the Sun,—

The gifts of all our Guardian-stars seemed his
In fullest measure. Heav'nly melodics
Found tender echoes in his earliest speech,

And as he grew, divine affinities
Seemed ever round his path, to guide and teach,
While none on earth did e'er in vain his love beseech.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

12

For surely he was bright Apollo's child,
Like a young god men thought him, winged with fire,
With eyes like stars, and brow serene and mild,
Like to those angel friends who gave his lyre
Wherewith to harmonize the world's desire,
Fashioned of pearly light, by hands unseen.
In sweet communion with that heav'nly choir,
His childhood's days divided were between
Earth and a fairer world than she hath ever been.

13

Men thought a sister star had stooped to earth
When with him there appeared a little maid—
A star of tenderest radiance, drawn to birth
Near darkling forests, lightening their shade
Like a rare bloom in some deep hidden glade,
A delicate flower, ethereally fair
As Dawn's cloud-sisters, yet most unafraid,
Though whirling storm-clouds wracked the denser air
She with mankind awhile disdainèd not to share.

14

There was no bond of blood between the two,—
Their parents were near neighbours; the same day
Both babes were born, and side by side they grew,
Constant companions—in their childish play
And later, in their studies. Like were they
In looks and in their thoughts,—not strangely so—
Being twins in Spirit, on the same Great Ray
Come forth from the Eternal. Hence below
Ne'er far apart could they from one another go.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

15

Born in the valley, both in infancy
Were taken with their parents to the Plain
Beyond the mountain pass, beside the sea,
And on the shore companions were again;
Where round precipitous cliffs the winds complain
Along the rock-bound verge, and roughly woo
The strong, free waves; in Nature's own domain
Inured to storm and tempest thus they grew,
And first-hand knowledge from that awful contact drew.

16

Their food had always been plant-fruits alone,
Never the flesh of plant or beast or bird,
Therefore no dumb things feared them or made moan
In their protecting presence; naught was heard
But welcome where they came, for at their word
Of sweet authority none ever dared
Molest a sentient creature. They who stirred
No enmity, but all their good things shared,
Had naught to fear where'er in any worlds they fared.

17

Strong-souled from that encounter, fearless, free,
Prepared to search her less familiar ways,
Concealed within the outward pageantry
Of elemental powers, grew ere the days
Of youth were o'er, clear-sighted through the rays
Of pure heart-sunshine. Nor, to clothe their life,
Took toll of death from any that displays
The marks of sentiency; remote from strife
Of man or beast, they dwelt, where only joy was rife.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

18

But when Ananda reached his sixteenth year,
Because he was the cousin of a king,
And his one day might be the ruler's sphere,
Since only two untimely deaths would bring
Him to his kinsman's throne; he might not cling
To aught he loved, but must perforce depart
To learn of worldly ways the smart and sting,
All that belongs to the true statesman's art,
And to all human woes subject his untried heart.

19

For, far away across the weary sea,
In that strange land long years he must remain
To study at the University
And later at the Court. He knew 'twas vain
To appeal against his fate, yet hoped again,
If kingship e'er were his, he might restore
In his new country Nature's purer reign—
The simpler, truer laws observed of yore;—
Ah, well he knew the world was not as heretofore.

20

More ancient histories than any known
To western scribes, from many a secret page
To him and Mitra had been lately shown
By their one teacher, a renownèd sage;—
Tales of the unremembered Golden Age,
Legends of mighty kings, gracious and wise,
Who gave their people freedom to engage
In every noble art and enterprise,
Protecting each, with power that scorned to tyrannize.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

21

For then the people were as children, guided
Till they learnt self-reliance, having passed
Through many an age of strife while, undecided,
In multitudinous opinions glassed,
Truth, into man's obscuring mirrors cast,
Reveals Herself to his unfolding sight,
With every partial vision seen more vast,
Until his soul doth with the Truth unite,
Becoming his own king and priest of the One Light.

22

Thus taught, Ananda had resolved to be
One of the few who seek to save and guide,
So that the pilgrim host, Humanity,
Lose not its way through intellectual pride,
Nor be o'erwhelmed by passion's raging tide.
And most he pitied ignorance, enforced
By poverty,—time, means, for growth denied,—
Man from his birthright impiously divorced,
To mute, unthinking toil for bare subsistence forced.

23

Strange to the boy new come from Nature's school
The Court life seemed—like a bewildering dream,
Unnatural, colourless, as 'neath the rule
Of dreary night, earth's gayest flowers seem,
Shades in a shadow-world, beside a stream
Of blackness rolling by continually
Beneath the pomp and show, its base extreme;
The first glimpse of the abyss of poverty,
Civilization's curse, meant hell for such as he.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

24

His heart seemed dead within him, turned to stone
By that first sight of human misery—
So much as in men's faces may be shown,
Set in the midst of its prosperity,
Insulted by its vaunt of liberty,
In the proud centre of a modern state,
Jostling its beauty and its luxury,—
While politicians strive to palliate
The injustice whose root-cause they dare not contemplate.

25

And yet he found a fertile, flowery land,
Full of rich pastures, orchards, cornfields wide,
Much land untilled, forests on every hand;
'Mid many a monument of national pride
In her world-famous sons, on every side
Beauty and plenty smiled, and ample space
There seemed throughout the verdant countryside
For all who, crowded to one straightened place,
Made their metropolis a national disgrace.

26

At Court he quickly found himself beloved,
His youth, his beauty and his gentle ways,
The natural grace and ease with which he moved
In unaccustomed scenes, beneath the gaze
Of most fastidious eyes, won general praise;
For though court etiquette sore chafed his soul,
He schooled himself as one who now obeys,
That later he may rule, observes the whole
Seeking to understand, one day to take control.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

27

But one thing marked him out, he was the same
To all men, met with equal courtesy
Princes and menials, men of rank and fame,
And their own servants, equal chivalry
Showing to women of whate'er degree;
For he could recognize no barrier set
By difference of rank or destiny
To human fellowship; with all he met
He *felt* that brotherhood, he never could forget

28

The lesson of Life's oneness, earlier taught
In Nature's closest and most intimate
Communion, 'mid perpetual havoc wrought
Among her works, seeing how Life innate
Triumphs through every change, inviolate
Surviving each frail shape and form destroyed,
Escaping thus from that which must stagnate
Outgrown,—a prison save it grows,—made void
That by the Life more perfect forms may be employed.

29

But he was greatly blamed by anxious folk
Who thought his freedom dangerous, tending much
To foster discontent, wherefore he spoke
Less in the hearing of his peers with such
As they looked down on, but with kindly touch
And manner showed his friendship would not change;
And by-and-by was he constrained much
Far, far beneath his own degree to range
For love that no misunderstanding could estrange.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

30

His near companions could not understand
A nature free from prejudice and pride
Of wealth or rank or learning, in a land
Where these with virtue were so close allied
They even could sometimes its absence hide.
To share his aspirations there seemed none.
Heart-friendship thus to him was long denied
Save in the thought of that belovèd one
Whose gentle presence ever on his boyhood shone.

31

And loneliness o'erclouded Mitra's soul,
For desolate now upon the dreary shore
She seemed, no longer free, serene and whole,
Youth's sweet content seemed fled for evermore,
None of the old joys could her peace restore,
Though naught was changed, the world was glad and fair,
But she no heart could find for mystic lore
Since now there was no kindred soul to share
The knowledge and the beauty earth for her might wear.

32

For, parted thus as brother and sister fond,
In absence both more closely did unite,
Through sorrow finding a yet deeper bond
Than childhood's sweet unquestioning delight
Had needed speech to seal. But, winged with light,
The tender echoes of Ananda's thought
Came to his friend, long ere he dared to write
His love to her, and how duty had wrought
New bonds for him, whose soul ambition ne'er had caught.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

33

How all his powers must henceforth be spent
In service for his people, how the love
That knit her soul with his,—yea, all it meant.
For both of them, they must in service prove.
He told her then of how his spirit strove
Among the shades of Selfishness and Pride,
And pleaded for her love, though he must rove
Long years far from her. But, to cheer and guide,
'Twas his for ever—she in spirit by his side.

34

And earth grew brighter. But the more he saw
Of the Court-world, the more he yearned to be
Away with her, his spirit was at war
With the cold, stifling unreality
The atmosphere of insincerity
Of Custom unsustained by kindness;
He sought in vain Love unashamed and free,
Serene and natural, simple tenderness,
Unguarded save by its own self-forgetfulness.

35

Yet many a woman learned to love him well,
And through her love learned self-forgetfulness;
Court ladies whom love seldom could compel
To aught but shallow, seeming tenderness,
And more than one stately and proud princess.
Ananda like a vestal maid was still,
But love of him their hearts did richly bless
And for them all, Love's purpose did fulfil,
Uniting, although not according to their will.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

36

Love, but desire not,—yea, love on for ever,
And leave thy need to be supplied in this—
Yet not supplied, but lost; nothing can sever
Thee from thy loved ones, in thine own love's bliss;
Give all therein, and nothing canst thou miss,
Thy very self bestowing, heart and soul,
The selfless giver Love cannot dismiss,
Love is its own return and its own Goal,
Thou ne'er canst lonely be, united with the Whole.

37

Yes, love and homage everywhere were his,
His grief was for the lack of sympathy
With those who for the world's necessities
Toiled all their days in sweated drudgery,
Ill-fed, ill-clothed, housed often criminally;
For to his ears not all the mirthful sound
Of wit and laughter could shut out the cry
Of hungry children far in slumland found,
Down in the city where "sorrow made holy ground."

38

For secretly, disguised, he went there, probed
Ev'n to the vilest haunts of degradation
A modern State may show, when famine, robed
In mute dishonour's bitterest desolation
Goes hand in hand with lust, despoils the nation
All unawares, of peace and purity,
When diverse ranks have lost their true relation,
And progress does not lessen poverty,
Because it is not shared in social equity.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

39

Yet there were kindly, generous souls at Court,
Of strictest honour in their own world's eyes;
But oft, alas, superior folk distort
Their claims upon the poor whom they despise,
And waste their leisure given for exercise
Of higher talents,—which not all possess.
And thus Ananda found, the kindlier wise,—
And gracious women, crowned with gentleness,—
Lost in the general stream of ignorant thoughtlessness.

40

They were not slow to give—in charity,—
Nor slothful in good works, but all the while
Feeling their own superiority
So much, that all they did,—the very smile
Meant to show kindly feeling, (and beguile
The poor to meek endurance and blind trust,)
Seemed but another boast to make more vile
The slaves of hunger, misused power and lust,
Mocked with the name of freedom, yet into bondage thrust.

41

And more and more he sought to win for man
Knowledge, as more he saw of that distress
Which from unthinking ignorance began,
So that the children born to serve and bless,
Were made the helpless tools of covetousness
And all the sins men label “civilization,”
As though they thus were “counted righteousness”;
But greed and lust and lies will scathe a nation
Ere it can find the Truth and work its own salvation.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

42

Children, ill-taught, he found, drudging for bread;
Sons of the plough, long exiled from the soil; .
Strong men refused employment, yet unfed,
While thousands need the produce of their toil;
Women dishonoured; and from all this coil
Long sanctioned by perverted custom's blight,
The cleverest gathered the unholy spoil,
For personal ends misused the guardians' right
Of fuller knowledge—theirs as stewards of the Light.

43

Not all th' enchantments showered around him could
 Make him forget the ugliness and woe
And waste of life for the mere lack of food
 To nourish forms on earth wherein to grow,
 That of Itself the Spirit more may know.
No shape of light could from his thoughts erase
 The noisome depths of that abyss below
The hill where in a wide and pleasant space,
The palace stood, walled in, far from the populace.

44

Last, in one solemn hour of consecration,
 Within his own soul's inmost sanctuary,
He vowed him to the task of reparation,
 Till all the poorer workers should be free
 As their own powers could give them scope to be;
Not lawless, nor unguided, nor neglected,
 Nor yet despoiled, in the world-family,
Put to no disadvantage, but respected,
Only for mutual help and betterment directed.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

45

No more could he keep silence, but returned
To tell his firm resolve in eloquent speech
That with the flame of pure compassion burned,
Fired to describe, to warn and to beseech
Justice and ruth from all his words could reach.
But, startled from long centuries of sleep,
The Court, aghast at this preposterous breach
Of all th' unwritten laws designed to keep
Ill out of sight as tho' buried secure and deep,

46

Could only hurl derision on his head
Who dared to break them, "in presumptuous pride"
"His lonely childhood" was to blame, they said,
"Twas "but a passing madness." All denied
That any remedy could be applied
To social wrongs, "best left unrecognized,"
That had not unsuccessfully been tried;
"Such things" were "part of natural Law, devised
For needful discipline"—in selfishness disguised !

47

A few among his fellow-students only
Heard him and understood, with grief and shame,
Who deemed their burning thoughts useless and lonely,
Who knew and mourned the truth before he came,
And gathered round him now with hearts afame.
And with their help he sought out thoughtful men
Among the workers, men of steadfast aim,
Intelligence, and thrift, and these again
Made known to one another—units unlinked till then.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

48

And he became their leader; thus around him
In time a band of real reformers drew,
With whom the bond of one great purpose bound him.
Till in their midst an airy temple grew
Builded of noble thoughts,—the thinkers few
But these ideals eternal.—Brotherhood,
Which practised, lived, would of itself renew
The nation's weal, where now for lack of food
Its little children died, in midst of plenitude.

49

For once, they said, 'twere felt that to each child
Belonged by equal right of human birth,
All needful things—enough and undefiled—
For simple sustenance of life on earth,
And teaching to draw out his powers' full worth,
Whatever calling his true bent might be,
His rightful share of labour and of mirth
Ensured him,—equal opportunity
Would train a nobler race, content and strong and free.

50

In time young Prince Ananda became known
Throughout the country as the people's friend,
Before the public gaze he stood alone
As one who all his influence would lend
To win them right, who as their king would end
The tyranny of lawless wealth, one who
Ev'n as a faithful guardian would defend
The poor and helpless; thus among them grew
The hope that he would reign and build the State anew.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

51

His now no more to follow with the tide
 Of human praise, beyond its ebb and flow
His hopes were centred, and he strove to guide
 His student-followers that they too should know
 The calm indifference to personal woe
He knew each one must share who by his side
 Would fearlessly proclaim himself the foe
Of social crimes by custom sanctified,
And the hypocrisies in which they needs must hide.

52

At length the smouldering fires of discontent
 Whose fury selfish rule one day must reap,
Through many a century in silence pent,
 But gathering force with every year of sleep,
 Fanned by Ananda's sympathy, did leap
To life in glimmering hopes, dreams unexpressed—
 At last articulate—faith buried deep,
And, for renewed oppressions unredressed,
Defiance that no longer could wholly be repressed.

53

Not only when Ananda and his friends
 Met, was reform discussed, but everywhere
Men might be found who sought the self-same ends,
 Who on their hearts the people's woes did bear
 Ev'n as elder brothers, who would wear
Crowns not of power alone, but ministry
 Kindly and free; but others too were there
Who only sought a false equality,
Redress but for themselves, unshared liberty.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

54

For discontent can never be " divine "

While personal passion mingles with its fire,

While selfish purpose can pollute the shrine

Which holds the lower nature's cleansing pyre,

While thwarted will and blasted hopes can tire

The zeal that from the scathless spirit came ;

But, when the phantom gleams that lit earth's mire

With a false glow, die out unfed for shame,

Then, selfless discontent may rear its cleansing flame.

55

Ananda did but feed the kindling fire

With sympathy and love ; he strove to guide

The force of just but passionate desire

Into the channel of a nobler tide—

Wisdom and purest altruism allied

In one great, cleansing stream. But outraged need—

• The simplest wants of life too long denied—

Had wrought too much of bitterness and greed

For men to wait in peace while he might intercede.

56

He never let himself be missed at Court

From any duties or state ceremonies,

So there the poisonous breath of ill report

Could ne'er assail him ; thus few enemies

Were known to him, and many friends were his

Among the nobler souls who gathered there,

Moving amidst wearisome revelries

With tolerant ease ; to join him few would dare,

But more than he yet knew his thoughts unbreathed did share.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

57

Thus till he came of age obedient
To the king's will was he, and well to know
His future field of toil, much time he spent
In travel as in study, high and low
Among the workers publicly would go,
Becoming yet more skilled in argument,
Learning how want becomes the deadliest foe
Of any nation, and where'er he went
Spoke to the people, growing each day more eloquent.

58

Till some who knew him came and told the king
What doctrines they had heard him preach of late,
" Stirring up discontent, endangering "
They said " the peace and welfare of the State !"
The monarch, furious, sent for Ananda straight,
Frightened and roused to wrath that knew no shame,
And bade him then and there repudiate
All efforts for reform, withdraw his name
And sanction from it, and hurled upon him bitterest blame.

59

Back to his books and teachers bade him go,
His royal cousin should have known, he said,
Better, how popular tumults rise and grow,
How discontent and anarchy are spread
By sentimental compassion fed,
Only to plunge the poor in worse despair.
But while reproach was thus hurled at his head,
Ananda nerved himself yet more to dare,
As scapegoat for the people, their reproach to bear.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

60

“ On one condition only will I cease
To work for just reforms,” said he at last,
“ Through them alone can be enduring peace.
If you yourself, as in the ages past
Kings did, will lead the people, linking fast
Their hearts to you by love and sympathy,
Using your royal influence to recast
The laws of service and of property,
So that the ‘ hands ’ who sow may reap prosperity,

61

“ Using your power to repair the waste
Of human life, the cause of this unrest,
And so avoid the curse of violent haste;
Take counsel with the wisest and the best
Who know the people’s wrongs and do protest,—
Then will I follow you, for ‘tis my creed
That kingship is in service chiefly blest,
In ministering to the people’s need,
Else what’s a king for—wanting love’s sole right to lead ?”

62

First the king laughed, then said ‘twas vain to hope
To alter social ills by slow consent
Of legislators, who could only cope
With their results, not causes; argument
Was little use, and still more impotent
In modern ages kingly influence,
He had no power to deal with discontent,
He could not teach employers common sense,
He could not punish sweating, or force obedience.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

63

“ Nay, Sire, you wield a mighty spiritual force,”
Ananda cried, “ Sometimes authority,
But chiefly good example, wake the source
Of latent virtue to activity,
And stimulate their inward potency.
Just laws call forth man’s nobler qualities,
Obedient to his self-made destiny,
And to the Life which moulds his faculties
Toward that full perfection which one day shall be his.”

64

“ But you would have us share all things alike,”
The king replied. “ Make all the people ‘ free ’
(If that were possible); you’d thunderstrike
Mankind into one false equality
Which could not last an hour.” “ Nay, liberty
Is from within, dependant on our will,
Our faith,” Ananda said, “ our purity.
I grant you that; yet must we not fulfil
Our human brotherhood, and work for freedom still ?

65

“ The woman of the streets our sister is,
The thief is still our brother,—younger, yes,
But ours; one day our virtues will be his,
And ours maturer. I do not profess
That all should share alike, some wish for less
Than others care for, all do not demand
The same things or conditions, or confess
The same opinions, but I would command
That all in equal right with one another stand;

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

66

“ That opportunity should answer need,
That each be giv’n free scope to do his best
To serve mankind, by thought and word and deed;
Those who in any way would harm the rest
I would restrain, but not in vengeance, lest
Crime be provoked to ev’n a worse degree,
Them I would put to school, to teach and test
As younger brothers, ere I set them free,
Not punished but prepared to value liberty.”

67

At this the king cried, laughing, that of course
Ananda knew these were utopian dreams,
Government could not be except by force,
And punishment for crime, these pretty schemes
Were only fit for poets’ airy themes,
Men could not yet be ruled in such weak ways.

“ Not weak,” Ananda said. “ To me it seems
We find what we expect, and sometimes praise
Of good does more than blame men’s characters to raise.”

68

“ You must indeed be mad !” his cousin cried,
“ Give me your word that you will spread no more
These dangerous doctrines.—May no ill betide
The country now and be laid to your door !
Nay, ’twould be placed to my long-suffering score
Because I brought you hither—to my shame.
Why was I not informed of this before ?
There was enough unrest before you came
To give it the protection of our royal name !

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

69

" Go now, withdraw it, and withdraw yourself
From all support of such seditious views,
Before you ruin the country and yourself."

" My liege, my liege, I did not idly choose
My present course, I cannot so abuse
The people's trust," Ananda made reply
Beseechingly. " O sire, in pity use
Your royal power, and heed your people's cry
Who, while we wanton here starve, sell themselves, and
die!"

70

" If you were king—as you shall never be—
You would stir up and lead a revolution!
Armed, in the name of gentle Liberty!
You'd overthrow our ancient constitution,
Our laws of property, by resolution
Of a deceived and slavish Parliament,
Or failing that, by force, till destitution
Were in worse form renewed. But I'll prevent
By some means yet, I swear, thine impious intent."

71

He left the room in haste, and to his own,
Half blind with sorrowing, Ananda fled—
Scapegoat and leader, misunderstood, alone.
Might he have suffered in the people's stead
He would have faced with joy the storm ahead,
But for the nation rent with strife he thought
Upon the days to come with anxious dread,
Yet for himself undaunted, knowing that naught
Good ever can except through sacrifice be wrought.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

72

That night took place a meeting to demand
For women th' equal scope to serve the State
That suffrage gives; many throughout the land
Were seeking freedom to co-operate
With men as citizens, not to dominate
But only serve more freely. To speak there
Ananda went, with new resolve elate,
Strengthened by strife, for he his part would bear
With all who sought the burden of th' oppressed to share.

73

But after he had reached the hall there came
And mingled with the crowd till he had spoken,
Officers of the law, in the king's name,
Who then took him in custody, 'mid broken
Cries—such a storm as might have giv'n them token
Of worse to come,—the gentle leader too
Sweet-voiced and beautiful, who first had spoken,
Roughly they took, thinking her friends were few
Not knowing how quickly in those days their numbers grew.

74

The charge against them was conspiracy
Against the public peace, because she sought
To show so well the need for liberty
That women would not rest till it were wrought,
By swiftest, surest means; but they both taught
That peace would gain their end sooner than war,
The strange thing was that no one ever thought
Her eloquence a danger, ever saw,
Till the king's cousin joined her, that she broke the law!

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

75

Then, 'twas a good excuse to banish both
To their own country, far across the sea,
Hoping thereby to check the sudden growth
Of the demand they made for liberty.
Th' authorities had no idea that she
Was so much loved, or so well knew the laws,
Nor could foresee Ananda's destiny,
They did not know how popular he was,
Nor gauge the widespread following of the women's cause.

76

Their trial, barely the perfunctory form
Of justice, but a shameful travesty,
Was hurried through amid the gathering storm
Of popular displeasure; bitterly
The king regretted their arrest, but he
Had now no power to retrieve the blunder,
Although its instigator secretly;
But while upon them broke the storm's first thunder
Their strong serenity was all the people's wonder.

77

Marœa's birthplace was that Vale of peace
Where Mitra and Ananda too were born,
And 'twould for them have been a blest release
To leave that land of tyrannies outworn,
Again to seek the everlasting Dawn;
Ananda had been wholly glad to hear
His sentence, but for those he left forlorn,
Needing his presence, both to guide and cheer,
To whom the future seemed less fraught with hope than
fear.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

78

And many gathered in the chill grey dawn,
Weeping, to see them go, the second day
After their hasty trial. And thus one morn
When Mitra from her window far away,
Looked out to sea at dawn, across the bay
Hemmed in by snow-white cliffs, rugged and riven,
She saw their ship. Through all the years each day
Since young Ananda left her, she had given
This earliest hour to him, and faithfully had striven

79

To learn how all things in one hearts' desire
Meet, and at last unite in Love's dawn-glow,
So that it mattered not if earth or fire,
Tempest or whirlwind, happiness or woe,
Should part her from him, should she never know
Aught of his life, how they would still unite
While the swift thoughts soft breezes Homeward blow
Brought her his love, his comfort, while the light
Of his own presence made her inward life so bright.

80

But when she saw the ship like a white bird
Clear in the glistening pathway of the dawn,
Hastening to land, it was as if she heard
His greeting by the brooding skylarks borne
Across the rose-lit waves and golden corn;
All Nature seemed to hear and understand.
With wingèd feet down the green pathway worn
Through the deep woods, she sped, till o'er the strand,
She saw Ananda spring forth on the gleaming sand.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

81

Like a tall lily, or bright shape of air,
 Standing within the entrance of a chine
Deep-wooded, swayed in ethers pure and rare,
 The fairy priestess of a woodland shrine,
Waiting where boughs and blossoms intertwine
 To make a shelter and a sanctuary
Wrapt in the light of harmonies divine,
She seemed to him and to Maræa, free
To share with her awhile the forest liberty.

82

They met—Earth caught her glimpse of paradise,—
 And then Ananda made Maræa known;
And in her Mitra seemed to recognize
 A friend of long ago, whose love had shone
Through many a life for both of them, and won
Great things for men. Gladly she welcomed her.
 And then he told of all the work begun,
And the soft sighing breezes seemed to share
Their sorrow for the distant land whose woes they bare.

83

And while they rested in the woodland glade
 A vision shaped itself in Mitra's thought,
She seemed to stand within the solemn shade
 Of a great hall by mighty builders wrought
With giant blocks of stone that ne'er were brought
By human strength unaided to their places.
 Haunting, familiar melodies she caught,
Echoing down the dim, majestic spaces
Where, between marble columns, shone happy children's
faces.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

84

The joyous song swelled high as there appeared
Two figures on the daïs, one beautiful
As some wise queen of race divine, revered
And no less loved, the Head of that famed school,
(Ananda now), whose mild and gracious rule
Shed purest influence in that earlier time
When a free people were more dutiful,
Though young in intellect—the power sublime
That like a buried seed slept through th' Atlantean prime.

85

And with her came a helpmate, (now Maræa);
And near the daïs a maiden fair and young,
Ananda's sister, to whom both were dear,
Stood, leading the glad children's welcome-song.
And Memory, sleeping in her heart so long,
Told Mitra that she was that songstress fair,
Whose love thrilled in her voice, tender and strong,
Who stood crowned with white flowers and shining hair;
And then the vision passed, her two friends only there.

86

And with them on that peaceful shore awhile
Maræa stayed to rest, for well the three
In converse many an hour could beguile,—
One in Ideal, and one in constancy
To the same Purpose. There, beside the sea,
Ananda wished to found a college, where
Such as desired to work for liberty
As pioneers, might study and might share
His knowledge and his aid,—for now, his father's heir,

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

87

He found sufficient means at his command,
And in those days, serenely purposeful,
With Mitra's and Maræa's help he planned
The building he proposed to make his school,
(Where he and Mitra should bear equal rule);
Enriched with choicest works of every age,
Spacious, white-walled, round-cornered, beautiful
In simplest fashion, and the gentle sage
Who taught them both, for his director did engage.

88

And when Maræa had left them they began
The preparation, and while day by day
The building grew according to his plan,
To all his friends left sorrowing far away
Ananda wrote for help. Some did he pray
To come to him as teachers, and the rest
To send him all he needed, such as they
Could find in every country, of the best
Treasures of art and books; thus he sent forth a quest

89

That made his college famous, so that when
It stood complete, from homes where liberty
Was held in reverence, maidens and young men
From far and near, his pupils came to be,—
Knights-errant of new dawning chivalry,
Enlightened, disciplined, prepared to brave
A world of scorn, true knights of purity,
Justice and peace, to strengthen and to save.
And Mitra and Ananda thenceforth wholly gave

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

90

Themselves and all their powers for this emprise,

Free for whate'er the future might demand

From them, of labour or of sacrifice.

And with the years, some of their student-band

Returned to spread their teachings in the land

Ananda loved,—who sent them, knowing the Spirit

Ruler of every chance, in sole command

Of Time and Space and Form, all to inherit

Wherein from life to life its shadows may find merit.

91

He knew that in the lower world of form

Their lot could only be continual strife,

Detached outposts amid the gathering storm

Where hatred and hypocrisy were rife;

But in the inmost sanctuary of Life

They and he knew they were united still,

And with the Soul of all the world for wife,—

To whom, thus yielding theirs to the Great Will,

The highest vow of service they should each fulfil.

92

One morning five years after his return,

Oppressed with vague foreboding Mitra woke.

She rose at dawn and hastened forth to learn

What news might be abroad; but Nature spoke

Of naught save joy; it might be the fair cloak

Concealing sacrifice, but everywhere

Was harmony, the dancing wavelets broke

In shining ripples calmly, the sweet air

Breathed life and gladness, but its peace she could not

share.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

93

Veiled in the light of dream's unclouded thought,
Robed in white fire and haloed with the dawn,
As though some vision's meaning still she sought,
She gazed unseeing o'er the dew-bright lawn
Starry with blossoms, out beyond the morn;
The dim, dread vision, mirrored back from sleep
Imperfectly, back to the daybreak borne
Had cast the shade of prophecy so deep,
Her dreamland watch she seemed constrainèd still to kee

94

But she was still a priestess of the Light,
And thus Ananda saw her in the wold,
Hastening down to greet her, from the height
Russet and moss-green shaded, crowned with gold;
Where autumn forests temple-like enfold
They met, and with the kiss of friendship mingled
Their greetings,—one, needing no symbol's hold,
Twin-stars of one white Fire, in Heaven commingled,
Twin-spheres of radiant Light, only appearing singled.

95

But who is this that comes with so much haste ?
Wild-eyed, distraught, of haggard countenance,
Who, breaking through the forest, layeth waste
His path, grown o'er with beauty and romance;
The twinkling lights 'twixt leafy shadows dance
Around his fateful figure, gaunt and grey,
And his despairing looks darkly enhance
The grim disorder of his torn array,
Showing the desperate haste of his unheeding way.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

96

Ananda knew him,—he was one of those
Brave workman-thinkers who had gladly come
To hear and help him, in the dark'ning close
Of his own student-days; then as one dumb,
Forced to an uncongenial trade, his home
Curst by a drunken father, and his wife
A victim of the same disease become,
Made his naught but a place of sordid strife;
So from the dreary prison of his shadowed life

97

He passed into the world a silent soul,
Until Ananda's kindly influence
Won his repression and strong self-control
To forceful, rough and rugged eloquence,
Wrought in the fire of stern experience
Fighting his own way through to liberty.
• A zealot, but no friend of violence,
One of Ananda's trustiest helpers he,
Steadfast and true, a son of Nature's chivalry.

98

“Ananda!” Through the forests rang the cry,
The woodlands echoing that belovèd name
As though his memory ne'er from thence could die;
In reverent unison the heights proclaim
The love that followed with his world-wide fame.
The traveller, hastening toward him, from the shore,
Vainly, with parchèd lips, strove to exclaim
All his impassioned cry seemed to implore,
But thus Ananda heard his destiny once more.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

99

He ran to quench with water from a spring
Near by, in his own cup, the wanderer's thirst,
And wrung his hand and cheered him, and would bring
Mitra to tend and welcome him, but first
He cried: "As envoy from a land accurst
I come, Ananda, to beseech thine aid
For her redemption, for the very worst
We feared, hath come to pass, in our crusade
Armed revolution chaos of fire and blood hath made.

100

"In strikes and lock-outs violence began,
Then, in attempts to quell the riots by force
Recklessness grew, man lost respect for man;
The cry for right was met by troops of horse
To drive the starving back without remorse,
(For Parliament permits that worse repair).
So now the ruin must run its deadliest course,
For starvelings take the courage of despair,
And for redress and vengeance fearfullest odds will dare.

101

"And now like wildfire 'mongst the people spreads
The passion for a false equality,
Perverting ev'n our comrades; counting heads
They think to arrive at wisdom and be free.
Some ev'n of those who used to follow thee
Would each restrict the rest to his demand,—
Forget the law of mutual liberty;
And many now take fire and steel in hand,—
Strong hearts and true, whom thou, thou only, couldst
command.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

102

“ Public and private buildings, property
Of all descriptions, they have scrupled not
To damage and destroy, deliberately;
Nor have respected life; despaired of aught
Being done by legislation, since the vote
Is used so blindly,—party politicians
Into their leading-strings so long have brought
Our representatives,—their superstitions;
Being themselves secure in wealth and high positions.

103

“ Like some great storm-cloud huge with latent might,
Its billowy peaks piled deep on one another,
Ready to flash swift death from its dark height,
And in one cloud-burst all live things to smother,
That cleave in vain to the distressed Earth-Mother;
Or else the living rains give gently forth
Their strength,—that brother may stand true to brother;
So were the mighty thoughts that came to birth
With thee, in benediction on the thirsty Earth.

104

“ The King doth blame thee only, for this woe,
And many blame thee; yet he sent for me,
Since I am known to be a constant foe
Of violence. ‘ Responsibility
For this mad, suicidal anarchy,
This passion of destruction’ —so he said,
‘ Sprung from distorted dreams of liberty,
Must rest on my young cousin’s foolish head,
Through whom this feverish discontent began to spread.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

105

“ ‘ And yet he never fostered violence,
(So much we know), nor was inspired by greed;
Well-meant, no doubt, his most rash eloquence,
And he was one of us, despite his creed.
Go, seek and bring him hither with all speed;
He may perchance prevail with these mad folk.’
And so, my prince, I came,—in our dire need,
But ne’er endorsing the harsh words he spoke
In the first panic when this gathering storm-cloud broke.

106

“ But ah ! ’twill be at thy life’s peril,—prince,
Joy of our hearts,—I know not how to ask
That thou shouldst come. How wilt thou e’er convince
Poor wretches hunger-maddened ? ’Twere a task
Past Hercules; they never yet could bask
In the clear light of thought thou shedd’st on us,
’Tis sure they cannot now see, through the masque
Of death and pain, the life continuous
Not in ourselves, (I hold) but those that follow us.

107

“ How can they take the large, impersonal view——”
“ Enough, enough ! I come,” Ananda cried.
“ Fear not for me ! Should I not share with you
(Tho’ I too immortality denied)
My friends, your heavy burdens, by your side
Fight on to Freedom—as in truth I do
Still, but unseen ? I come—whate’er betide.”
Like some poor faithful servant, tried and true,
But powerless to prevent what destiny brought due,

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

108

The messenger looked on him, mute with love
And reverent sorrow. Mitra, standing by
On the cliff-side, a little space above,
Speechless, heard all the message, and the cry
That would, and would not, call on him to die
If need were for the people; swift as light
She sprang to him. And with a shuddering sigh
The messenger spoke on, though from her sight,
And from his task, he fain would refuge him in flight.

109

" How will they listen ev'n to thy words now,
These starveling zealots, with their wild demand
For all they need at once, for freedom ? How
Can they see good brought out of ills that stand
Like monstrous tyrants o'er them and demand
Their lives and those they love, with facts' hard speech ?
. And yet—and yet—thou only couldst command
A hearing from all classes, who canst reach
By sympathy to what is truest, best in each.

110

" Yet do I fear for thee, my prince, that first,
Ere thou hast time to win them to reflect
On wider facts and moral truths, the worst
(Lost to all tolerance, reason, or respect),
In each opposing faction, may reject
And blindly turn and rend thee—even thee !
And this I know, the King cannot protect. . . .
'Twas with the strictest, fearful secrecy
He sent for, spoke with, and commissioned me to thee."

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

111

Ananda still replied: "I come with you;
I fear no death." Then turned him to the friend
Who stood beside him dumbly, she who knew
His heart of hearts, she who that day must send
Him as her warrior forth, whose love must blend
With his compassion: "Mitra, I must leave
In thy charge all the work we here defend,
Thou wilt not let the hearts that love us grieve
If I return no more in this life's Sunset-eve!"

112

But low she cried: "Must thou indeed alone
Brave all this storm? Could I not aid thee best
With thee—among the women, thou hast shown
Always, in such a time, the worst distrest,
Who in their sordid lives are oft opprest
Too sorely for a gleam of hope to come
(Till kindly death brings all they know of rest),
Into the noisome prisons they call 'home'?
How can they grasp thy thought, whose night no stars
illum?"

113

Ananda looked on her with silent grief,
As if his soul cried out in agony:
Mitra!—my Mitra!—one—beyond belief
Of earth-bound souls, my friend—one heart with me
In Spirit-nearness! are we not yet free?
Oh, Mitra, fail me not in this last hour!
But all he said, softly and tenderly,
Was: "Shall we then relinquish all the power
For service, that our influence here gave us to shower

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

“ Forth for the wide world’s help, the power of Those
Unseen, Who work through us ? It may not be.
This was the task They gave us, that we chose,—
Their trust to us.” She trembled, silently,
And bowed her head; she could not but agree
Shamefaced; and in his arms wept, and besought
Forgiveness, gave her promise to be free
From selfish fear, to strengthen all who wrought
With them, and looked to them to guide in work and
thought.

115

“ Yea, though I would we shared this banishment,—
Thou knowest how much ! . . . There is no separation
For us, who love,” he whispered, as they went
To call the school together. “ Incarnation
Itself hath seemed a severance, but cessation
Of these desires will bring—not ours alone—
But the true ‘ Heart’s Desire,’ the revelation
Of unity in difference, leading on
Ours to that vast Reunion where all are known as one.”

116

And thus he led her back with him to peace;
Then to th’ assembled school quietly spoke,
Told all that had befallen, how th’ increase
Of knowledge was misused among the folk
Of his far country, but swiftly awoke
His hearers’ sympathy for them, and told
Why he must go. Then, lamentation broke
From every voice, by love and grief made bold,
Until he asked their calm, confident thoughts to uphold

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

117

His strength, and, gently chiding, won them all
To share his work in thought; and not a few
Among the elder students, whose recall
To their own homes drew near, prayed to go too,
And would not be refused,—to dare and do
Beside him, be his guard. And so he sailed
Once more, and Mitra watched with heart made new,
For, while foreboding sorrow still assailed,
His strength and his compassion, and her own love,
prevailed.

118

They had but disembarked on that far shore,
When one came to the envoy, in his ear
Told of a secret meeting, almost o'er,
Held by incendiaries. Ananda, near,
Heard, and exclaimed: "I go there. They'll not fear
That I'd betray them." Thither straight he went,
His students following, and did but appear
Inside the doorway of the basement lent
For this dark conclave sworn to sinister intent,

119

When such a shout of joyful welcome rose,
As might betray the meeting far and wide,
But no one heeded unremembered foes—
Ananda stood amongst them! Like the tide
That hastening homeward, all the rocks doth hide,
And sweeps their spoil of wreckage back to shore,
Or in one haven folds all they divide,
So did the love and deep respect they bore
Ananda, peace awhile to their dark thoughts restore.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

120

They led him to the platform, wildly cheering
Till, at his hand uplifted, silence fell
Instant, complete; it seemed, their deep revering
Was his through sympathy's unfailing spell.
And ringing cheer on cheer round him did swell
While he began to speak, from many a throat
Whose voice had all but rung their monarch's knell.
But soon his oratory took on a note
Which on their hearts dismay and disappointment smote.

121

For he began to show how violence
Can never end itself, or vanquish wrong,
That thought, resolve, reason, and eloquence
Must win their way to victory ere long
In a just cause, since Truth and Right were strong
Above brute force, how violence only brought
Fresh and redoubled strife, heaped wrong to wrong,
Could add no new enlightenment to thought,
But stirred more bitter hatred through the havoc wrought.

122

" My friends," he cried, " remember all we learned
Together, not so very long ago.
All for which human hearts have ever yearned
Must be their own at last, the seeds we sow
In thought and will, to full fruition grow.
Take heart, fear not, deliverance is at hand,
The time hath come to end your age-long woe;
We are a strong, united, steadfast band,
Enough to win without brute force your just demand.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

123

“ But justice lies not in equality
Of wealth or rank or intellectual powers;
The truth of our divine identity
Rests not on these for proof, we find it ours.
In all the little things of life,—sweet flowers
Of sympathy, spontaneous kindness,—
In common hopes and fears, in general showers
Of kindred thoughts, both rich and poor confess
Co-equal worth and being that all alike possess.

124

“ All must be free, but all cannot be equal,
Save in their inmost Spirit-nature, one,
For ever, in diversity co-equal;
Even as one abiding, Central Sun
Vivifies many forms, remaining One.
For in the larger—as in this—life’s stage
Men—brothers—are not equal, nor do run
The same in evolution’s pilgrimage,
Experience; but are one in divine Parentage.

125

“ But only through the power, of loving-kindness
Can mortals know and feel this unity,
And overcome our separated blindness,
And witness to the true ~~se~~quality,
Immaculate, indissoluble, free.
The elders of the race must help and teach,
Bring forth on earth the Brotherhood to be,
And render life’s necessities to each
As he may need, to work ~~to~~ the highest his powers can reach.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

126

A hissing murmur interrupted him,
Surprise and anger flashed from every eye;
And meeting them Ananda's own grew dim,
With pity, as there came one bitter sigh
As from a single voice, then a harsh cry:
" He hath returned against us, not to save !
To preach, while we in pain and squalor die.
He would condemn us to our living grave,
He, ranged with those who rule us only to enslave.

127

" At heart an aristocrat, he cannot bear
This proof the times have forced, nor feel our need,
Howe'er he seemed to love; he too must share
Our justice !—he, a swayed and broken reed !"
" Smite on, my friends," he said. " Shall I not plead
Your cause ? Will you not let me first engage,—
I who can never rest till you be freed,—
To win for you, for all, a living wage,
And make the land the people's ? I perform your
embassage.

128

" Shall I accomplish ?—Be it as ye will."
His students pressed around him, but he waved
Their quick defence aside, serene and still,
A little smiling, sadly, waited, braved
A storm whose sight on every heart was graved
Unfadingly, who shared it. Yet some knew
But for his banishment he could have saved
The country from such havoc; they were few,
But strong in purpose, who called for his death anew.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

129

The whole assembly murmured, wrangled, found
 No prospect of agreement what to do
Concerning him. "Spare him, but take him, bound,
 Back to his judge!" cried one. Another: "No,
 Spare him awhile, but let him freely go
To plead with those who banished him!" "What!—
 free!—
 A princeling, to betray us? Nay, not so;
Nor free nor bound. Either he dies, or we.
Let him not from our sight; do justice, speedily!"

130

"What! Are ye all mad?"—"Twas a woman's voice,
 That from their hearts the gentler echoes stirred.—
"At his return why do ye not rejoice?"
 She held a puny babe, and wore a sword;
 A woman trusted to make good her word
Of guidance to them and encouragement,
 In sterner deeds abroad. "He will be heard,"
She cried. "Perhaps will win. Maybe they sent
To fetch him back, to make us, not themselves, relent!

131

"But he hath come to help us and to lead!
 Who would have dreamed the day could ever be
When ye would greet him through whom we stand freed
 From fear, with base, ungrateful mockery?
 Distrust and anger? Shame on them—and ye!
Give him glad welcome!—Hath not he done more
 Than any of us? He is for ever free.
Let him go to them,—but not as before,
 Unguarded and alone!" None, hearing, could ignore

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

132

Her counsel; since they lost Ananda, she
Had been their trusted guide,—and now she saw
Clearer than they, his truth. They left him free;—
Some still not trusting, but in sullen awe,
Vowed to their own uncompromising war;
But some responded to the gentle spell
His presence brought,—defiant of the law
That banished him, who loved them but too well.
So he passed out with these, who all their hopes would tell.

133

And reasoned as he went with others who
Still trusted him, but round his teaching spun
Misunderstanding, like a web of new,
Distorted, strange half-truths, sought to outrun
The justice he desired, with dreams that none
Would find acceptable, or recognize,
If they could be fulfilled. That day's red sun
Went down upon the city's glad surprise
At his return, and many a wondering surmise.

134

Sad hearts took hope to see him pass their door,
And wan folk round him thronged with piteous cries:
“Ananda! Save us!—for 'twixt rich and poor,—
Those who would save, but darkly tyrannize
Over the tyrants, lo, we perish. Rise,
And rule both factions!—thou shalt be our king!”
This he denied, but turned to sympathize
With each and all. And so the mob did bring
Him to the palace gates, and set them echoing,

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

135

Reverberate with his name, till all within
 Rejoiced and wondered, (save the king, who sped,
And now recalled him). And he passed within.
 With the thought-atmosphere of pride and dread,
The pathos and the power of all he said
To king and senators and all he saw,
 Still pleading as of old, for the unfed,
And not for charity, to keep in awe,
But for a living wage, established first by law.

136

On hearts too frightened to be reasonable,—
 And too long closed,—his pleading fell; they cried:
“ Persuade the people to be peaceable,
 The workers to return—without their pride !—
Then talk reform.” Oppression they denied.
So to the people he returned, to live
 Among them, share their sorrows; and to guide
Once more the force of their initiative,
And work for them with all the powers he had to give.

137

Long weary years he toiled with voice and pen,
 And won both for himself and for his cause
Th' unqualified respect of honest men;
 But these seemed strangely few, or else old laws,
Their use outworn, yet unreformed because
Men were born blind, held such perverted sway
 That progress seemed lost in a ceaseless pause
For breath which never came. But day by day
He slowly gained new ground with hearts that must obey

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

138

Their younger brothers' cry for help, for love.

These all but worshipped him, in the release
He wrought for them, who erstwhile blindly strove.

Where'er he came self-doubting seemed to cease,
His eyes spoke sympathy, his voice breathed peace,
So that all who had touch with him found rest,

Felt in his presence their own powers increase,
Found strength their own they knew not they possessed;
Thus did he bring new life to all that were oppressed.

139

And many did he win from violence.

And then his influence began to tell
With some employers, learning common sense,

They found it paid to treat their workers well.
And thus his leadership began to quell
The revolution, and some measure brought

Of slow reform, which further must compel;
And still for social betterment he wrought,
To rivet class with class in closer friendship sought.

140

But there were many malcontents remaining,

Who since reform so slowly can fulfil
Through years of arduous strife and long complaining,

And many failures, the collective will,
Could see no cure but force for social ill
Not made illegal,—dreamed of right therein,

Yet who could never cure but only kill;
Who thought to find a remedy in sin,
Forgetting it could only deeper misery win.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

141

And these folk raved against Ananda still,
Because he held men from retaliation.
But stronger grew the force of popular will,
Till, after years of patient agitation,
A measure passed for moderate taxation
On high land-values. But before it came
Near victory, the storm of indignation
Among land-owners, lit once more the flame
Of passion amongst those who thought all patience shame.

142

They hoped to enforce the rule of Brotherhood,
And blamed Ananda for the long delay,
Because he sought to bring a lasting good,
By free conviction—not by force, while they
Thought to have won far sooner in their way.
They all agreed that to set free the land
For all the people's use, would clear away
One primary cause of suffering, and must stand
As their first aim, its ownership and sole command

143

To be at least held by the Crown alone,
(Or so he said, who deemed the monarchy
Essential to mankind); and toward that one,
The lowest step leading to liberty
This measure of taxation was to be.
While popular dispute was at its height,
In a large, open city park did he
Convene a great mass meeting, that the sight
Of the reformers' strength of numbers, brought to light

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

144

Should give their words due weight. When he appeared
On one of twenty platforms in that throng,
After the mighty, ringing shouts that cheered
His coming, round on round, echoing long;
While he began to speak, calm-eyed and strong,
In clear, sweet tones of confidence and power,—
A voice rang out, that told of wrath and wrong:
“ How long shall we in craven patience cower,
The land still held from us?—Now is our destined hour.

145

“ ‘Tis Prince Ananda hinders this reform,
Not helps!—our foe disguised. Shall he not die?
He’s for the landlords truly.” O'er the storm
That drowned in indignation this wild cry;
Above the crowd, aimed from a tree hard by,
Flashed out a sudden, swift and fatal shot,
Found that compassionate heart. The people’s cry
None who then heard it evermore forgot,
For he had fall’n, their martyr, smiled, and answered not.

146

Then those who loved joined with those who had scorned,
Grief and dismay commingled when ’twas known
Throughout the city, the whole nation mourned.
The King retired to weep and pray alone,
And Court and people, rich and poor, were one
At last—in sorrow. In a few hours’ space
Ananda’s purpose through his death was won,
He wellnigh worshipped by the populace,
Who made the city one desolate mourning-place.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

147

And lo, the new land-statute on the morrow
Passed into law, complete and unopposed;
Passed, not in joy, but calm and reverent sorrow.
And so that nation's darkest period closed;
Dawn slowly broke, an angel interposed
And waked the sleepers. True prosperity—
Shared by all classes—grew, wrong was not glazed
As heretofore, but recognized, to be
Removed by sure degrees, till every man stood free.

148

And "Prince Ananda" is a household name
Throughout the land, beloved and honoured now;
For every mother spreads his deathless fame,
Telling her children all he did and how
He died for freedom—theirs, unquestioned now;
How, leaving her he loved, in selfless ruth
He came and dwelt among them, scorned to bow
To any passion save the zeal for Truth.
And thus his memory still inspires the nation's youth.

149

Two of Ananda's students, broken-hearted,
When sunset closed that fateful, dreary day
After his passing, from the town departed,
Embarked at dawn's first twilight chill and grey,
And o'er the seas to Mitra fled away,
With him who mourned in self-reproachful grief
Because he fetched Ananda; the bright ray
Kindled in death for all the land's relief,
Brought none to his sad heart who knew no sure belief

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

150

As yet in things unseen. A sceptic he
Who toiled on earth with no reward in view,
Content to render frail humanity
In his short day and hour the service due
From one of its own children. Born anew
(But not remembering,) in far-off days
When with Ananda and his chosen few,
He laboured in a past life whose bright rays
Through altruism to knowledge fixed his fearless gaze.

151

Mitra was waiting on the lonely shore,
(As once she watched Ananda's landing there,)
When the three disembarked. To them once more
She seemed Light's priestess, and no whit less fair
For all the years. Alas that they must share
Their grief with Nature's loveliest, tenderest child,
Breathing the essence of diviner air,
And ruling like a mother pure and mild,
In that abode of peace and beauty undefiled.

152

She greeted them with joy, but sudden shame
Seemed to possess them, only in their eyes
She read their tidings, breathed Ananda's name—
“ Is he not with you ? ” As from summer skies
Toward the grey North the sunset glory dies,
The light grew softer from her gentle gaze;
They saw she had no need of their replies,—
She knew that truth which silence well conveys,
Yet, death's diviner meaning oft from earth delays.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

153

"Ananda!—there is magic in the name!"
They cried. "It stirred in us faint memories,
Locked in oblivion till th' awakener came
And tuned our hearts to beat and feel with his
The shame of our time-honoured tyrannies.
He brought us hope, new trust in our own powers,
Recovered lore from far-back centuries
Which he recalled; he made his own hope ours,
For life and strength returned in his love's Springtime
showers."

154

They told her all the long and chequered story,
The sorrows and the joys of their campaign,
And how his griefs had proved Ananda's glory—
Surmounted, how not one had been in vain,—
Till all was told, of strife and toil and pain,
To Ananda's passing. Then she bowed her head
As though in praise of some heroic strain,
But mute as if for heavenly comfort fled.
Till presently the messenger, half-musing, softly said:

155

"Lady, a strange thing yet have I to tell;
A tale I would not have believed before,—
Beyond words wonderful. To me it befell,
Midway upon our voyage, when no shore
Was visible. On me came more and more
As I gazed sadly o'er the desert sea,
The sense of hopeless loss, to my heart's core
I was one cloud of helpless misery,
Blind, groping in a vast, blank, starless vacancy.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

156

" Then suddenly, I knew not whence or how,
Ananda stood beside me. Though so near,
I saw him riot.—I do not see him now,
Yet do I feel and know that he is here;
Ananda's self is with us who are dear
For aye, to him. Life cannot cease to be.—

Yea, ev'n to me at last that truth is clear,—
The truth he taught us, yet I ne'er could see
Or feel, bereft of knowledge as of memory."

157

Radiantly Mitra looked at him and smiled.
But one of the two students wearily
Broke in: " There is not either man nor child
Nor any creature living, he would see
In sorrow, and not comfort tenderly,
If he but could; yet we two cannot feel
His presence now. Why should you only be
The one to whom he comes?—if this is real—
No dream? He never would disdain our hearts' appeal."

158

Then Mitra spoke, her bright eyes brimming o'er;
Herself, poised in great calm. Tenderly, low:
" Earth is still earth," she cried. " And earth no more
Can see Ananda's form." Then paused as tho'
To gather strength, to spread her wings, and know.
" But friends, earth never did see him, complete;
Ne'er saw himself, but only the bright glow
He sent through form, our spirit-selves to greet
In this dark sphere of action. We were bound to meet

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

159

" Because we've worked together many a time
On earth, with him for guide.—Nay, hear me, friends !
This love you bear Ananda, his,—sublime,
Outpoured for all the world, all love, which lends
To Earth a glory not its own, and bends
Ev'n earthly happenings of most transient worth
To its own heavenly purpose, never spends.
Itself in them,—this Love is not of earth,
Nor with material things could ever have its birth."

160

" 'Tis better to have loved and lost,' they say,
' Than never to have loved,' " one answered low.
" But I have never lost !" cried Mitra. " Nay,
Ananda's self is here—and yet not so,
But where Ananda goeth there I go,
Yet still on earth about mine own tasks move.
Ah why, why cannot ye this glory know ?
Feel ye not still the radiance of his love ?
Ah, how may I to earth his unseen presence prove ?

161

" Love cannot perish when the mortal form
That clothed its object dies,—ye know that well.
Ananda's love for you is still as warm
As when you saw him with you—when he fell
You did not cease to love him ! Forms compel
A limited expression, there is room
For freer work where now our Friend doth dwell
Within a finer body, which no tomb
Can prison, in a region of perpetual bloom.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

162

“ ‘Tis hid from us, ah yes, our eyes are dim
With watching this dense world; that rarer sphere
Doth interpenetrate it; now, to him
Our forms are but as dust in sunshine, near
But unregarded; for our thoughts are clear,
Unveiled, the joys and sorrows that are ours.
And soon in Life’s unfolding, even here
Forms will not veil, the Spirit’s latent powers
Will blossom perfectly as these full-opened flowers.

163

“ Then Earth, and Man, her highest work, will be
Both perfected; his complex nature brought
Into full growth, proportioned harmony;
Each element unfolded, pure, and wrought
With all the others blending,—Will and Thought,
Emotion, Intuition, Spirit and Soul
In that perfection every age hath sought
By many paths, will merge within its Goal,—
Divine Self-consciousness,—itself made pure and whole.

164

“ Ah, mourn not for Ananda ! He is here.
Look but within,—or if ye will, above—
And inly greet him. He is more than near,
He lives in us. Methinks that when I move
Or speak, or think or dream, and when I love,
It is Ananda doing all these things.
Ah friends, that you too might this wonder prove !
Dwell in the Spirit, spread your own soul’s wings,
Forget the form round which your thought still fondly
clings.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

165

" Dwell in the Spirit, for Ananda's sake,
Then for each other's, then for all mankind's.
Live in your inmost Selves, nor fear to take
Ananda for exemplar; who but finds—
(Although the veil of Form so often blinds)
The Highest through a reverenced elder brother
Who points the way to our dull hearts and minds ?
For we do feel and know in one another
Th' Eternal Self, the while we learn to love each other.

166

" He lived in me and I in him, while yet
He dwelt on earth and strove beyond the sea,
And it is still the same. We may forget
The deeds through which we seek the Mystery,
The forms that shadow forth Infinity;
But hearts united in a selfless aim
Can never lose that inmost unity
Which was before the worlds of Form became,
The Parent Fire that lit their passion's earthly flame.

167

" Where'er our forms may be, howe'er employed;
Whate'er our thinking may be focussed on;
From these we rise, in essence unalloyed,
No longer ' he ' nor ' I,' not two but one—
As we were ever, in the Light that shone
Unmirror'd, ere the lower worlds were made.
We realize, ev'n before Earth's Night is done,
Our thoughts withdrawn awhile from its lone shade,—
Th' Eternal Oneness where our hearts have ever stayed.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

168

“ And through that individual realization
Of our inseparateness, we seek to know
Th’ essential unity of all creation,
Indissoluble, uncreate; and so,
Centred beyond the storms that surge below,
Yielding our wills to His Who made them ours
.For service which of free goodwill doth flow;
Thus consecrating all our thoughts and powers,
We find all perfect gifts inalienably ours.

169

“ Yea truly, I Ananda’s life do share;
Discerning Beauty by its inward Light
Deep in the heart of all things everywhere,
In that Great Heart we always did unite,
Though Time and Space parted us in their night;
And still we are one, while our love is given
To every creature, thus our lives unite,
And we with each, all mis-attraction driven
Into illusion now the veils of sense are riven.

170

“ Each good for its own use, but not to veil
Eyes that can bear it from the Light that dwells
Within all forms—they, shadow-like and frail,
But That within, immortal. The sweet spells
Love weaves in every act or word that tells
Of spiritual union, draw us ever nearer
To one another, like true marriage-bells,
While we forget earth’s shadows, to make clearer
The wider Love, while others day by day grow dearer.”

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

171

She ceased, and sighed, for pityingly she saw
 The two not yet could understand or feel
The truth she told, despite the reverent awe
 With which they gazed upon her, though the seal
 Of Love immortal shone around her, real
As the unclouded sunshine, whence or how
 They knew not; but earth could not all conceal
The starry light that rested on her brow
 And in her eyes,—her beauty seemed diviner now.

172

She sighed, and turned to him whose kindlier eyes
 Were looking on her with a reverent wonder;
Who added then: "These inner faculties
 Time only can unfold." "Through many a blunder
 We learn their use," she said. "Lives torn asunder
Find Life itself thereby, though oft deceived
 First, till the truth speaks like the lightning's thunder
When by one withering flash earth stands bereaved,
 And all seems wrecked that was with so much toil
 achieved.

173

"Life is not all a riddle, answerless,
 To those who search its sacred mystery
With altruistic purpose; kindness
 Finds kindred everywhere, community
 With every living thing,—Love's alchemy
Transmuting thought and making power its own.
 To him whose heart-chords rest in harmony,
For all creation to make music on,
 All things in heaven and earth shall be at last made known.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

174

“ This partial self is rife with much delusion;
We lose clear sight in yielding to its will,
And thus work out our own age-long confusion;
It must be so, e'en darkness doth fulfil
The purpose of the Light, there is no ill
We cannot turn to good. But love which we
Gave first to one alone, must widen till
It can embrace all creatures tenderly,
Can be to them a constant, perfect ministry.

175

“ Love cannot be kept pure for one alone,
That is not purity, though 'tis its shade
While we still call the personal life our own
In earth or heaven.—Yes, men are afraid—
Not blindly—of the strong desires that made
Our earthly school-time, till Love's purer glow
Scatters them like the morning mists; then, laid
On Light's High Altar, these, dissolved will flow
Transfused, on universal ministries will go.”

176

Head-mistress of the College many a year
Mitra remained, her wise, enlightened care
Foundation of full many a fine career,
Which owed to her an inspiration rare.
Many the boys and girls sent to her there
From far and near, who under her mild sway
Grew as flowers grow, but disciplined to bear
The burdens of the world; free, blithe and gay,
But nobly trained to share and give their joys away.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

177

And there was one, her pupil and her friend,
From earliest boyhood, whom she had prepared
Her own philosophy to comprehend;
With whom her deepest thoughts and hopes were shared,
With his expanded, reinforced, compared,
So that he might grow worthy to inherit
Ananda's charge; and like herself he dared
Untrodden heights of thought, and in their spirit
Showed forth life's common things; thus Mitra proved
his merit.

178

Till after many years of toil she sought
Her work in spheres where less and less of earth
Is mingled with th' essential light of thought,
Until it merges, in more glorious birth,
With the pure Spirit, reaping the true worth
Of all experience, now seen from above
In right proportion; with no loss nor dearth
Of forms at need.—Lives past, their essence prove
Where all things joined in one divine completeness move.

179

So, in the Starlit Dawn of Earth's new Day,
North-eastward bound, first Mitra sought again
Her birthplace in the mountains far away—
Hers and Ananda's, and Maraea's,—the twain
One with all beings, freed from every stain
Of separation, free on earth to roam
Wherever help were needed, to sustain,
Comfort and teach. Beneath one boundless dome,
In the wide Vale secure, the world was Mitra's home.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

180

And she beheld the glistening pinnacles,
Ethereal sapphire merging in snow-white,
Gleaming like heavenward-pointed icicles
That pierce the diamond glory and unite
In th' all-encompassing, supernal Light,
Symbol of spiritual Beauty, Truth-unveiled
From earth's wan mists; th' illimitable Height
Unclouded, still by human feet unscaled,
In roseate ethers wrapped, for ever unassailed.

181

But naught in earthly language can be told
Of her new service for humanity,
Save that Ananda shared it as of old,
And all who loved them, in new liberty,
The friends of every being eternally;
With wider powers and fuller consciousness,—
Still deeper insight in Love's Mystery
Which words but veil and shadow, not express,—
Of Life Itself, and Thought's swift-wingèd power to bless.

182

While Time between them still awhile did run,
In service they had found the spiritual bond,
That earth might hear the song in heaven begun,
The chords of Being that each to each respond,
Blend into harmony and merge beyond
The lower separateness that works confusion;
Each whole, united, but not vainly fond—
Each for the other wrapped in blind exclusion,
But given to every heart, they fled the great Delusion.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

183

Human perfection is the threshold oonly
 Of superhuman life; pure souls are led
Through perilous trial-grounds, obscure and lonely.
 Humanity can but be perfected
 When once for all transcended—when instead
Of separateness, in utmost separation
 Union is felt, though every friend hath fled,
Misunderstanding, though such isolation
Be but of heart and mind—that last supreme probation.

184

When righteous wrath (so-called), ungentleness,
 Deserved rebuke, would seem well justified,
Yet only calm, compassionate tenderness
 Finds place within the heart to earth denied,
 Or in the mind cleansed from all stain of pride.
For Love poured forth alike to friend and foe,
 Which finds itself with all the worlds allied
As with the best Beloved, alone can know
The truths men vainly wish material things might show.

185

He who would climb the rock-built peaks must take
 Materials from the plain of destiny
Strewed by himself in common ways, to make
 The first rungs of his path toward liberty.
 Only from hills already climbed can we
Discern the distant loftiest mountain heights,
 Perchance 'mid whose majestic purity
The Voice which populous valleys hear not, lights,—
Speaks to the childlike soul, and earth with heaven unites.

LIFE CANNOT CEASE

186

And thus the Great Ones who now teach and guide us
 But lead us on, to Greater, Who one day,
When we unite with those found then beside us,
 Will lead us further on the Narrow Way.
 What heights may stretch before us who can say ?
The ladder's foot stands firm in steadfast earth,
 And out beyond—within—the clearest ray
Reflecting Love Divine in human worth,—
 Our Path awaits, above the spirals of rebirth.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

A DREAM OF PILGRIMAGE.

SOME sudden turning in a shaded lane,—
 Breaking of sunset gold through leafage dim,—
The stillness of a vaulted forest fane,—
 The tender echoing of a woodland hymn,—
May wake mysterious memories, strangely filled
 With sacred sweetness, like some hidden scroll
Newly unfurled, whose gleaming letters gild
 Thoughts long forgotten with remembrance;—roll
The mists of ages by like night-clouds. So
 These silent hills, gloried with tangled woods
And fragrant dells of bloom like drifted snow;
 Rough, rugged paths of prehistoric floods,—
These changeless hills, cloud-swept and forest-crowned
 Draw from the mighty shadows of the Past
Figures and scenes in deep oblivion bound,—
 Images dim, as on a mirror cast—
The deathless Memory veiled by Nature's face.
 Earth's long lost heroes, laid asleep awhile,
Return and speak and dwell with us a space,
 Ennobling each ideal of our loved Isle.
Ye skylarks, mounting wrapped in ecstasy,
 In spherèd peace brooding o'er earth's unrest;
Thou diamond-sparkling showers' soft minstrelsy,
 Thou deep, compelling voice, wind of the west;

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Ye murmuring leaves and heavenward-spreading trees
Deep-sounding cataracts and rippling streams,—
Can ye,—and thou, O many-voicèd breeze,—
Interpret me the half-remembered dreams
Which haunt these dark yew forests of the Downs,
The scented hollows and steep slopes that fence
The wooded uplands and the ancient towns
That nestle in our Holmesdale Valley, whence
The Weald lies billowed like the crested deep
With leafage, where the fretting storm-clouds sleep ?
Yew-woods that form a temple vast and calm
Where sunset's azure mist like incense curls,
And hope with memory mingles magic balm,
Rich, rare and ancient setting for May's pearls,
Crowning the sunlit hills with mysteries,—
What secrets in your silences are kept,
Majestic children of the centuries ?
Bright day-dream visions wake me where I wept,
Borne on the wings of noontide reveries,
And light unmanifest shines in the hearts that slept.

Unguided thoughts which kindle, burn and fade
Like phantom nomads through a pathless plain,
Upwhirled in desert storms, then lowly laid,
But ever rising on their road again
(Like errant souls whom their own deeds constrain),
Well knowing though they journey fast and far,
And find no solace with each day's decline,
That on their eager way from star to star
Truth beyond this veil or that will shine,
And Truth herself provides her bards with words.
As in the night by means of hidden tears

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Condensed upon a mirror's scattered sherd,
Our breath, invisible as ether's self, appears.
So ye, ideas that flame awhile and flee,
At last must be declared in common speech,
When sunset-rifts awaken memory.
And ev'n the sunlight's living rays can reach
Earthly perception only as diffused
Through our dense atmosphere, in earth's new Dawn
transfused.

Above the Holmesdale, where the Emelë
Serenely toward the royal River glides,
Along the road which skirted these hillsides
From immemorial times, methinks I see
The pilgrims of the changing centuries.
First, 'mid the livid gleam of serried spears,
Foremost of marching warrior-companies,
Chief of three women charioted, appears
The Saxon queen, last of her royal race,
Fair as a lily, but with eyes aflame,
Yet beautiful, in supple strength and grace,
Stately and tall. Boadicea her name.

Tenderly pure as moonlight after storm,
Out of the shadow'd West toward them came
A cloud of shining dust that hid a form
Which proved a fair young knight of peerless fame.
The warm breeze lifted his bright curls, his eyes
Shone with white fire as of a soul made pure,
Serene through knowledge piercing all surmise,
The light of lofty thought, of hope made sure.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Laden with may-bloom and opaline dew
The bending boughs now veiled and now revealed
His snow-white steed as toward the host he flew,
Till by the chariot in open field
He knelt before the queen and spoke as few
Or could or dared, to counsel or to shield.
"Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni,
I bear a warning in my heart for thee.
Far in the western caverns of Undine
Of late a visioned dread continually
Hath crossed my soul, and yesternight it came
Persistently, and drove me forth to find thee.
For I have seen a waste of blood and flame,
And hordes of fiendish shapes, that haste to bind
thee.
Give not the Romans battle ! O resign
This purpose, lest their legions gather round thee
And shame and ruin o'erwhelm both thee and thine.
I see the harbingers of woe surround thee,
Making this air a prison-house of hell.
O Queen, unleash not War, be Peace thy crown.
Let not the nations say destruction fell
Upon thy people through revenge, renown
Of that false victory leave to Rome, O Queen!"
Standing she heard him, with unfaltering gaze
Fixed on the sunset, fearless, firm, serene,
A setting star lost in its crimson rays.
Then, "Percivale, pure-hearted knight," she cried,
"I know thy truth, and honour that same law,
Though this young, passionate world doth but
deride.
I would not have the arbitrament of war—

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

I am a woman—but, the yoke of Rome
Threatens my realm, my husband's trust to me,
I cannot reign in a dishonoured home,
I must lead on the battle of the free,
I cannot yield them to that hated power,
I, who have known their handling ! Nay, to me
Death is a welcome gate, a guarded bower,
Compared with loss of Saxon liberty."

And where the ways cross now I see them—she
A daughter of dethronèd womanhood
Mastered by sterner forces,—only he
With hands outstretched to save her, understood.
I saw his eyes aglow as with the dawn,
Set toward the moonrise on that glimmering height,
But ere the brooding starlight was reborn
In the last purple glow they passed from sight.

Strong Autumn Wind among the dark, sere leaves,
In the wild music of thy melodies
No note of awesome gloom or mourning grieves,
The world is filled with dawning ecstasies,
Word-echoes wov'n of love and hope and power,
Set to it fold in peace the golden sunset-hour.

Wind of the West among Spring's dancing leaves,
Lovely and fresh as wood-nymphs chaste and free
Thy breath-like speech of distant thunder weaves
Sound of a herald voice, and memory
Of him, the poor man's priest, with storm-worn face,
Who of our nation's prophet-seers taught first
That man was born one brotherhood, one race,
And since no creature was for ever curst,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Should be one family beneath God's Heaven,
And hold the earth in trust for common use,
That equal opportunity be given
Freely as life, that lordship must unloose
All bonds in which the poorer labourers groan,
The fruits of human toil as brethren share
In fellowship, no hunger-slavery known,
And so in heavenly worlds a home prepare.

Deep in the inmost shelter of the woods
I saw a peasant company concealed
In earnest converse. Lack of this world's goods—
Ev'n to necessities—their looks revealed,
Toilworn, yet starved and threadbare. Suddenly
Each, listening, held his breath,—the dead leaves
gave
Sound of a hastening footfall ! Was it he
Whom they awaited ? or some fellow-slave,
Who sought their meeting-place but to betray
Their leader ? From the shadows stepped a form
Robed in the friars' russet; sorrow lay
Heavily on his face,—for every storm
Of just revolt full many a wreck must leave
For all to mourn, and those poor serfs who dwelt
Bondsmen upon the land they tilled, must grieve
Seeing their kindred fall. Their woes he felt,
Bore on his heart the burden of their wrong.
And eagerly around him now they pressed;
To each he came with handclasp warm and strong,
With greeting and with words of wise behest.
The cowl shaded his brow, but from his eyes
The radiance of the seer's vision blessed,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Looking beyond the world's tumultuous cries.

He, in the degradation of his fold
Saw but the hireling shepherds' tyrant shame.
Seeking through lowliest haunts the hearts of gold,
To claim and call from dumb despair, he came—

Prophet of Peace and Fellowship; he told
How nothing could be well with them until
None ruled through riches, but in unity
Of interest and service, with goodwill.

"Children of one first parentage!" cried he,
"And sons of God in spirit!—what lawful right
Have any of ye to bear tyranny—
Hold brethren bondslaves in our Father's sight?"

He counselled them to go and show the king,
Young Richard, of their slavery and wrong,

That by some means, united they might wring
Redress and freedom from the rich and strong.
I saw him left alone upon the hills

When these, the flock he shepherded, dispersed
In silent twos and threes. His spirit stills
Ev'n now mysteriously the wayward worst
In some hearts such as theirs, as uncontrolled,

Yet ever yearning for heroic part
In sacrifice, for sacred Freedom bold.

In meditation, standing rapt apart
I saw him then, his deep, compassionate eyes
Like crystal windows whence the soul had fled,
The spiritual beauty of its paradise
Mirror'd in clear white light around his head.

Descending to the road, but hearing there
Voices, he stood in shadow till they passed,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

The sunset-gold gleaming through azure air
Among the red-brown shades the yew trees cast.
A pilgrim company bound from the West
Appeared, most sturdy Welshmen, bronzed and grey.
Their lord, in rich attire, before the rest
Rode with a gentle maiden, bright as day
In April dawning, robed in green and white,
With Conway pearls upon her snowy wrists,
Among the swarthy men so lily white
They called her "evening star among the mists."
Behind them came a youth on foot, alone.
Perceiving whom, the priest stepped from the wood
Beckoning, his features for an instant shown
Lit by the sun's last radiance, he stood.
"Father!" the pilgrim cried. "Till now I thought
Only in Kent to join thee; first I make—
By Gwynneth of the pearly mists besought—
This pilgrimage with her, and undertake
To do what may by prayer through faith be wrought,
At Canterbury vigil nights to wake,
For those brave men of Kent whom thou hast taught."
"Well doest thou, David," said the friar. "Thus
Joining with Gwynneth;—but, what wilt thou do
Concerning her, my son, when, linked with us,
Thy lot is one with ours for weal or woe?"
With one swift glance toward the vanished sun
The pilgrim answered low: "Father, we share
A home beyond the stars, for ever one
In spheres of peace whose sign our spirits wear.
I speke with her this day, she wills to do
For us whate'er a high-born maiden may."
The Priest's clear eyes, like evening's spherèd blue

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Starlit, shone eloquently. Twilight grey
Fell as he blessed the pilgrim, and they two
Together followed on the Pilgrims' Way.
A vision then within the vision came.
I saw the youth guarding that lily-maid,
Gwynneth, beside the hangman's cart of shame,
Wherein the friar, John Ball, stood undismayed
As in a Heaven-sent chariot of glory,
Amidst a heedless, hireling multitude
Howling: "To death—the traitor!" So his story
Of selfless labour, tirelessly pursued,
To free the serfs of feudalism, faded,
This only his unpardonable crime—
For Truth outwears all calumnies paraded—
He lived six hundred years before his time.

Then lo! into my day-dream woodland fays,
Clad in ethereal colours and may-white,
Came dancing, while from subterranean ways,
Gnomes, oafs, and brownies followed to the light.
These led me up the steep green slopes between
The spreading woods, into a blossomy dell,
Where, underneath the forest's beechen screen
A hermitage was built beside a well.
Oak-timbered and well thatched it stood, grown o'er
With wax-flowered clematis and bryony,
Woodbine and honeysuckle, whose sweet store
Brought swarming bees in busy harmony,
And butterflies in rainbow colours, birds
Unnumbered nested near his lone retreat,
Below, I saw the milk-white flocks and herds,
And caught the sound of sheep-bells and the bleat

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Of many lambs among the upland meads.

For "Merry England" was not fall'n asleep
In the wild night of unaccustomed deeds,

Nor had not lost those gentle souls to keep
In the rude warlike days of olden time

Hostels of peace and faith and fellowship,
Learning and charity, whom many a rhyme

Portrays in service and true stewardship.
Down through the woods two fair young children came

Bearing a pitcher of new milk and cakes
Of fresh rye-bread, the hermit called by name,

And cried: "Dear Father Hugh, our mother makes
Bread for us all to-day, and these for you."

Then came the hermit from the work he wrought
In his own garden-patch. Serenely blue,

Kindly and keen his eyes, and there he taught
The little ones their daily lessons, mild

But wise, and rich in knowledge of the age,
Himself in spirit like a little child.

A traveller, halting at the hermitage,
In journeying westward on the Pilgrims' Way,

Thus found him, and requested harbourage.
The hermit led him where a thatched retreat

Was built for hospitality, snow-white
Within, and always garnished, ready, neat,

For any guest unsheltered through the night.
The traveller wore ampullæ from Canterbury,

The little phials of water from its well
Of sacred power, close by the sanctuary.

Refreshed and rested, he proposed to tell
His host the tidings of the world at large,

First of his pilgrimage, then freely spoke

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Of things pertaining to the Church's charge:

" At Greenwich with my kinsmen, Kentish folk
About King Henry's Court, some while I stayed.

'Twas just before the monarch's marriage-day
With young Anne Boleyn, and great cheer was made.

One Sabbath morn, gathered in rich array.
Before the King there preached a Kentish friar,

One Father Peyto. From the prophecy
Of Micaiah, who, with words of warning fire,

One faithful 'mong false flatterers' perfidy,
Declared the truth to Achab, and foretold

The scattering of Israel's long-lost tribes,
As sheep without a shepherd or a fold,

And Achab's fall, 'mid curses and foul gibes,—
The Father drew his lesson for our time,

And fearlessly proclaimed the naked truth,
The King's new marriage was an impious crime,

Unlawful. Ev'n like some corrected youth
Or too surprised, perchance ashamed, to speak,

The King kept silence; nathless, his ire
Was voiced by one who preached there that day week,

Named Curwin, who denounced the faithful friar
In scurrilous language,—called him coward because

He was not present, yet knew well that he,
No craven judge administ'ring false laws,

Had gone in duty, called to Canterbury,
To Council conclave, next day to return.

One Father Elstow this proclaimed aloud
In words of stern reproof which deep did burn.

With Peyto he would stand in witness proud,
Though forfeit were his life. The royal command
Restrained his passionate zeal, for good men cling

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

To noble customs, though ignobly kept.

Pride tempts the realm to wrāth, and lures the King.

The men stood shamefaced and the women wept

At this repeated warning, but next day

I learned, the two brave friars were brought with speed

Before King Henry's Council, and that they,

Heroes, defenders of the Faith indeed,

Steadfast in testimony to the Truth

Continued both, and much I fear their meed,

Who could not flatter lust, held little ruth."

Voice of the Wind, majestic, strong, serene,

Speaking a language of ethereal spheres

Among the echoing trees, occult, unseen,

Lord of the isles of mortal hopes and fears.

A strange, wild exaltation thrills my being

Ev'n as the breezes lift my hair and breathe

Upon my brow, till, heart and mind agreeing,

Come thoughts which only silences can wreath.

Straight, smooth limbed beeches, rugged oaks and elms,

Our sylvan kingdom's grand nobility,

What memories lie hid within your realms ?

Have we no part therein, oh monarch tree ?

Guard you the secrets of the wind-swept Heath

That stretches from the summit, north and west,

Swept by pine scented breezes and the breath

Of sky space o'er its heather purpled crest ?

Kingston, Malden, Banstead, Sutton, Cheam,

Chipstead, Headley, Walton-on-the-Hill,

Burford, by the Swallow's lilied stream,

Cherchefelle, Betchworth, Buckland, Ewell Mill,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Dorking, Ewell, Banstead, Leatherhead,—
Are they not names to conjure with for me
As, looking o'er the wide Thames watershed,
Dread pictures of the Past are clear to see ?
Round Nonsuch, only venerable trees
Where once a royal palace proudly stood,
Perpetuate its haunting memories
Of him whom some have named King Charles the Good,
And others, blinded, much misunderstood.
There in mid distance, Kingston-on-the-Thames
Keeps still the memory of olden days,
And dotted here and there like living gems,
Among the woods and by the old highways,
Lie rustic villages, and many a spire
Points upward, like the towering forest-trees,
In graven echoes of the heart's desire.
Thanksgivings borne upon the tender breeze,
Spontaneous as the breath of daily life,
Untutored aspirations, burn and rise,
Whose incense at the Vesper hour is rife
Among the pine-groves under open skies.
Leatherhead, where highways meet and cross
Beside the shadowed Swallow's lilded stream,
And Kingston, near that scene of final loss
Which crushed the Royalist hope, declare your dream.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

A BALLAD OF REIGATE.

IN sixteen hundred and forty eight,
By the stately River winding down,
On the fourth of July in the evening late,
Lord Holland rides from London town.

Young Buckingham with him, proudest of peers,
Lord Francis Villiers gallant and gay,
And many a son of the old Cavaliers,
A goodly band in battle array.

Eager and young and fresh to the war,
For the Royal Standard is raised anew
For God and the King, Religion and Law.
But the King is a prisoner now, and few

Hope for his rescue, save these who ride
Into the heart of Surrey to-day,
Heedless of life and of all beside
Save to restore his peaceful sway.

At Kingston-on-Thames they halt that night,
Then southward ride in the summer dawn,
On Banstead Downs to re-unite,
Six hundred horsemen strong. Next morn

As many afoot are following down,
With shouting and songs the woodlands ring
As onward they dash into Reigate town,
To rally their countrymen back to the King.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

But Puritan Audley's troop of horse
Encamped near by 'waits hour by hour
Sir Michael Livesey's veteran force,
Outnumbering far Lord Holland's power.

Their strength is as of tempered steel,
For God alone to win or fall,
Alert, unflinching, sternly leal,
They too would sacrifice their all.

Holland has given the word " Retreat—
Retreat to Dorking." Must it be !
To fight them now means sure defeat,
To wait may bring us victory.

So forth from Reigate pass in haste
Those gay young lordlings undismayed,
Though disappointment's ill to taste,
In full one day 'twill be repaid.

On then past Buckland's village green,
Following fast the hills' dark line,
On, on through Betchworth, on between
Deepdene's groves of beech and pine.

Into Dorking as the sun
Sets in waves of flaming cloud
Over Ranmore, dim and dun
Wrapt in evening's misty shroud.

But the morning rumour brings
That Reigate's not in rebel hands—
Its castle still may be the King's.
Prompt are Holland's brief commands:

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

" Boot and saddle !" for swift return,
And back in the cool of the dawn they go,
But ere they reach the town they learn
They enter but to meet the foe,

Following now in hot pursuit,
With General Livesey in command.

" But are we not as resolute
As any rebel in the land ?

' Back once more to Kingston then—
We'll face and fight them if we must ;
But if we fight 'twill be as men
Who conquer or who bite the dust."

Up the steeply winding slope
From out the peaceful valley pass
With ever faintlier thrilling hope
As swift we glance behind.—Alas !

Lord Holland wears an anxious brow,
And well he may, despite our boast,
The Puritans are gaining now,
A dark, determined, tireless host.

Through the golden waving gorse,
The fateful, desperate race is run,
Sparing neither man nor horse,
In the summer morning sun.

Past Kingswood, over Walton Heath,—
The Cavaliers are leading still,—
See, the valley spread beneath,
Thundering down the dusty hill.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Northward ! down through Ewell then,
Kingston's but six miles ahead,
Oh, on, ye loyal gentlemen !
Naught but fear have ye to dread.

But Livesey's now in musket-range,
The rearguard soon will know his skill,
Hark ! the volleys interchange
Above the village, on the hill.

The skirmish there is sharp, but short,
For on toward Kingston goes the chase,
These gay young gallants of the court
Will never yield the desperate race.

An open common intervenes
Between them and the Riverside,
A fair elm-grove the roadway screens,
A narrow, winding lane beside.

Nonsuch Palace on their right,
Royal Thames a mile ahead,
The Cavaliers have turned to fight,
Young Francis Villiers at their head.

They face the Puritans again
In fierce encounter hand to hand,
Drawn up across the shaded lane,
A bold, determined, desperate band.

Many a brave and noble boy
Will win his spurs ere sunset glow,
Must many a one, his mother's joy,
Fall before the prayerful foe ?

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Away ! On ! Away ! For the battle is raging
Over the hills where the heather bells ring.

Away ! On ! Away ! For the hosts of the people
Have challenged the friends of the prisoner King.

Hark !—“ For the Lord ! For God and for Freedom !”
“ For the Lord, His Anointed, our King and our laws !”
“ The laws of old England ! Our liberties ancient !”—
Listen and choose ye, for God and your Cause.

Dauntless and leal are the desperate liegemen,
Fervent and faithful the hosts of the saints,
Let loose in the midst is the lust for a triumph,
Fiery and fierce now and past all restraints.

On then, away ! For the sons of old England
Cannot hold back when liberty calls,
And the wings of the Spirit will bear him to glory
Whose shadow and semblance for Conscience falls.

In the foremost of the fight
Lord Francis, with his eyes of truth,
Bears him like a valiant knight,
Like some Grecian hero-youth,

His gracious beauty, half concealed
Too strange and rare, too bright for strife;
He ne'er was born for such a field,
But for all loveliest ways of life.

But look ! his gallant steed is slain !
Back to an elm, in self-defence
He fights on bravely, but in vain,
For one slips through the hedge, and thence

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Strikes off his helm with coward blow.

The conflict's o'er, the Cavaliers
Are scattered, driven from woe to woe,
And England shares a mother's tears.

Weep, Duchess Catherine, weep and pray.

Though George is safe, thine eldest son,
In fair young Francis, lost to-day,
An English ~~man~~ gentleman is gone.

But yet again his chivalry

Will light the world in ways of peace,
In times more fit for such as he,
For war at last on earth *must* cease.

And so these heroes fought, and passed away,
Yet are not absent from us; day by day
They greet us, clasp our hands across the years,
Seen or unseen, through intermingling spheres.
And thus these visions of the storied Past
Entranced in waves of feeling held me fast.
Till the Gleam found me, and one night a star
Drew me and lit this vision from afar.

'Midst broken rocks piled in confusion round
A mountain summit, stood a dusky youth,
Beautiful, dark-eyed, in deep reverie bound,
Like one far tranced in perilous search of Truth,
Steadfastly looking toward his Native Land,
Watching for dawn upon it. Earth and Heaven
Were wrapt in one vast gloom, yet with one hand
He shaded o'er his eyes as if 'twere riven
For him by light whose power would break the tomb

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Of human vision. Stood as if he saw,
Not blenching and not blinded but prepared,
Patiently waiting in expectant awe
As for a sign, the Path whereon his fathers fared.
Sudden a Voice, or far or near, within—
Without—he knew not, spoke in low, sweet tones,
The signal Star-note, and he saw therein,—
The Light ensouling ev'n those silent stones,—
The living heart of all the worlds around,
Pulsing in sleep. And bliss so deep and rare
That never was such perfect rapture found
And told again for human thoughts to share,
Enfolded him. Then from that trance of flame
Wherein oblivious of dark earth he stood,
Recalling him to thought the question came:
“ Why, exile, art thou here in solitude ? ”
He answered: “ I have climbed the loftiest height
I knew, to watch for dawn upon my home.
My people perish in the bitter night.
For since a younger, sister race hath come—
Alien to eastern thoughts and ways—and wields
The sovereign power unchecked, and whether or no
Our harvest fail or flourish in the fields,
Hath levied tribute coin, nor cared to know
If our own needs could year by year be met
Unstored for, and the tax paid regularly,
The years of famine have been years of debt—
Debt or starvation, both most commonly.
Whereas our simple wants were well supplied
Of old, and we content within our shores,
Through mutual care and help to none denied,
In times of plenty garnering our stores

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Against unfruitful seasons, thus controlled.
And largely have we lost that spiritual grace
Our far more precious birthright. But I hold
All beings are one—exempt from Time and Space—
And therefore those who highest climb may win
Not for themselves alone but for their race,
Their friends, mankind, the good they seek, within,
To bring to all, without,—the Unity
Of both to find and point the way thereto.
And therefore have I sought, to set me free,
 iy of sacrifice, to think, to do,
ffer, by the ancient Path to find,
And if I might, make known to all mankind,
Ev'n on the Heights, th' Eternal Harmony.
Yea, for my trust is, that, as our one Sun
Folds every creature in the living Light,
So will the spiritual glory make us one—
All peoples, with the passing of the Night
That severed them, will consciously unite,—
Humanity at last one Brotherhood of Light.”

He paused: a sigh of joy, and woe, replied
From all the Earth-star's prisoners, and the Voice:
“Would'st thou be such a saviour, satisfied
In sacrifice?—then in that hope divine—rejoice.
Though by one way alone can'st thou release
And lead thy fellows toward the way of Peace.—
A path beset with bitterness, wherein
Each act is purposeful, with all must fit,—
Done nevermore for personal pride therein,
But since the Harmony hath need of it.
That way winds on o'er outgrown depths of sin—

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Outgrown for thee—through darker wilds than this;
A narrow ledge o'er a sheer precipite,
Strewn with sharp stones and barred by tangled thorn.
Thou hast well done, but more remains to do;
Though virtue must defend through all the scorn
That waits upon the pathway of the true,—
Thy great essential all the journey through,—
Not from this height shalt thou behold the Dawn,
But in the lowest depths of shame and wrong,
There, shalt thou see it in new-opened eyes,
In lives that thou hast rescued from the strong,
Through windows thou hast opened to the skies
For hearts so long delayed from Paradise.
If for the darkest toil thou art prepared,
For unrewarded, utmost sacrifice,
Heart-whole, a rock all earthly storms have dared,—
Down through the clinging darkness follow now.
Thou wilt not hear the Voice save in thine heart—
It is thine own—thy Self's;—durst thou depart?"

Not in hot haste the clear-eyed youth replied,
But in deliberate tones, steadfast and low,
Yet echoing through the shadow-land defied:
" I follow to the end, e'en through the midnight snow,
To the lit whiteness of the crystal Morning's glow."

Swift as the shaft which bears the heart's desire,
He passed into the realms of darkened Fire.
But as from newly stretched and tunèd strings,
Or from the living Light's uncilèd springs,
The air grew radiant with harmony,
And Nature's voice came swiftly on its wings,
Earth's gloom was rifted instantaneously;

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

The lightnings flashed around his perilous way;
Among the rocks descending, where the spray
Of rushing torrents roared and foamed beneath,
He passed, crowned with th' immortal Lotus wreath.

And groping through the forests' murmuring gloom,
Following still the star-gleam thus revealed,
'Mid fragrance rich as Summer's gathered bloom,
New glories yet my sleeping sight unsealed,
Mingling the heights within th' ethereal dome,
The Present with the Past, now unconcealed.

The Future lifts her starry gleam on high,
Spreading the glory of her constellations
Athwart the opening and translucent sky,
Lighting upon the waiting congregations
Robed in white light and haloed with the dawn.

Soaring, our hearts wend singing in the Heaven,
With tremulous breath, on quivering wings upborne,
Desire's worn fetters lost, for ever riven.

I found my heroes in the spheres of Thought
And purer Love, and some on earth beside me
Returned once more; and at their bidding wrought,—
Nor was their gracious friendship e'er denied me.

I called on God, and all things answered me,
Proclaiming common sonship, one in this,
Voice of the Past and voice of Prophecy,
Prelude to That I seek in ecstasy.

The Past is gone, its dreams of sorrow,
Confusion's oft-recorded tale,
Chaotic snatches, tones we borrow
Building up the cosmic scale;

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

The harmony remembering only,
Courage tried in pathways lonely,
 Wisdom single-handed proved;
Serene alike in cell or city,
Compassion touched by no self-pity,
 Only for its own unmoved.

I see a vast Cathedral, incense-filled,
 Known worlds will scarce define its breadth or height,
Its pillars man's aspiring thoughts fulfilled,
 Echoing whispers from the Infinite.
Its worshippers a brotherhood of lovers,
 Gathered from every country, race and clime,
For each with every heart at last discovers
 The bond which wove them in one harmony sublime.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

LOVE.

YES, I do think Love is its own reward
In greater or in less deserved degree,
But that great aspect seems to stand alone,
Distinct from all the rest in quality.

For surely the Love of another is to us
A great, free gift, again by itself, apart,
Spontaneous, limitless, ay, free indeed,
A world of glory glowing from heart to heart.

For Love is surely incomparable
With aught beside in any world we know,
No looking for return controlleth it,
Itself it giveth, and therein doth grow.

Another's Love is then a gift unmeasured—
Not necessarily return of ours;
But,—Love "returned" is this divinest glory,
Th' immortal crown of all our human powers,—

The living sacrament of Love's vast meaning,
Wherein two mighty loves are merged in one,
To shadow forth th' Ideal, life's consummation—
When *all*, in Love, shall know themselves as One.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

TRANSCENDENCE.

How little of us fills our earthly form,
Gives it enduring life, free pulsing, warm !
How little of ourselves can speech express,
Or ev'n our actions give the world to guess !
Our forms move to and fro amidst our kind,
We know, we feel with pain, how we are blind,
Unconscious of the worlds that round us press,
Wonders whereof the nature, more or less,
We dimly sense, nor dare such power confess.
And so we move these puppet forms about,
The wonders of this earth-world finding out,
Part of us dwelling in the shapes of clay
Framed to our schooling for a fuller day.
We move among the shadows of the Truth,
Nature's vast pageant of eternal Youth,
Exhaustless labyrinth of knowledge wrought,
In living emblems, myriad symbols, brought
From formless regions of the realms of Thought.
But, knowing we are more than all these forms,
We move serene amid o'erwhelming storms.
We are not bound save as we choose to rest
In any, while a partial truth, exprest
In such familiar figure, partial-wise
Reveals as much as we may recognize
Of Truth in any non-eternal guise.
We know ourselves outside all shapes of earth;
Before the Breath proclaimed our mortal birth

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

We dream we lived, we know we must live on
Though from the earth all human forms were gone.
All Nature, all things, show continuing life.—
The broken shell, when bondage maketh strife
Between th' indwelling and surrounding life,
That teach each other peace, perfection, won
Out of the wars of ages, justice done
Through strange confusions. Thus renewing Spring,
Autumn, and Winter, shadows that must fling
Their forms on earth. The sap within the tree,
Dying from outward sight and potency,
Revivifying every branch again
Year after year, re-linking the life-chain,—
Leaf, flower, and seed, and crowning fruit that makes
The path of Life a spiral, yea, and takes
The form itself, in essence of its being
At last out of the world of shadows, fleeing
Homeward, one with its Home.—But that is far,
Guarded by some yet undiscovered star.
Yet sure as constant Spring's renewing leaves,
Though every heart o'er earth's bereavement grieves,
The still returning cycles bring each soul
Back as the surging currents onward roll,
To take up in his vacant place once more
The task he left upon the rock-bound shore.
The chrysalis, buried in moist warm earth,
Holds but awhile the wings of fairy birth,
The creature formed for liberty and light,
Breaking triumphant from ensheathing night,
Rejoicing in its birthright power of flight.
As each man shows in slightest act and gesture,
In lineaments that mark his earthly vesture,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Some look of every one among his kin,
Whether through consanguinity or in
The spiritual, intellectual, deathless bond,—
So every type reflects a truth beyond
This visible world. Outside our bodies, yea,
Outside our storm-worn souls we feel we stay.
And further, year by year in clearer Day,
Within, long ages hid from human sight,
Without, as deeply veiled,—the perfect Light,
Full-orbed, orbless, immutable, supreme,
Life of our Life, Source of each potent gleam
That flashes forth all truths our souls inherit,
Dwelleth our Self, one with th' eternal Spirit,
Father, Mother, and Child,—formless, alone,
Being of beings at rest in each other—One.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

"IN A FLESHLY CHAIN."

EACH one of us is set, a link of gold,
Its place appointed in a living chain.

- What though the last links only may behold
The treasure each is needed to sustain—
Crown of the whole, heart of the mystery !
Wherefore "reluctant links" then should we be ?
For none is like another, though each wears
Some colours with the last and that to come
Matching or blending; strangely fashioned some,
Wrought diversely the common form each shares,
And all show trace in more or less degree
Of native, golden, perfect loveliness.
For each at last a flawless gem will be,
Fire-tried, wind-worn, earth-cradled, to express
A radiant, Star-like Power, to guide humanity.

As thy day is so thy strength shall be,
And grow, with knowledge, through the strenuous years;
Trust thou thy God, within, to succour thee,
And trust Him omnipresent, through thy tears.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

FIELD PLACE, WARNHAM.

GREAT Poet-Heart, whom we revere for ever !
The love that links us with thee naught can sever.
Thou who didst flash athwart the closing Night—
Earth's darkest age of ignorance—clear light,
So brightly mirrored forth, O fearless friend,
That we might now more fully comprehend.
Our waiting souls in a yet holier rite
Than earth could share before, thou didst unite.

Death hid thee from the world's averted eyes,
But from dark ocean-depths thou didst arise.
The sea could not contain that quenchless fire,
Nor all the whirlwinds break th' æolian lyre;
One with the waves and they and all creation,
Swift wings of fire restored thee to that nation
Which was thy chosen home, and to this isle
The Spirit which was Thou flew to beguile
Our hearts with beauty born of harmony,
That we might learn the Truth thou cam'st to free.

The vale thy dreams have peopled with enchantment,
Where younger souls dwell still in sweet contentment,
Is to us as a shrine, a place of vision,
Out of the blasts of anger and derision—
Ill thoughts of minds childish compared with thee.
But thou hast rent the veil of frailty,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Its use is passing with the Night away;
For we stand in the dawning of a Day
So full of wonder that but few have dared
Yet to accept the Truth our souls have shared,
Lifting our eyes with fearless rapture—born
To meet the Light of this transcendent morn,
This Dawn that shall arise upon the whole
Round world at once.—How can that be? My soul,
Sing of the possibilities revealed
~~Within~~ the effulgence whence our hearts are healed!
~~Within~~ Twill be that powers but in germ as yet
In man's own nature, will, increasing, set
New ~~knowledge~~ in the reach of all who grow
Beyond self-seeking, yea, and these shall know
~~Secrets~~ concealed in wisdom through the ages,
Except from poet-seers and prophet-sages,
Throughout all time, for Knowledge aye was Power,
And had that giant Tree begun to flower
Before the strength of altruism grew
Beneath the guiding care of Those Who knew,
Into a steadfast force of self-control,
Tuned with the One Great Will that rules the Whole,
Destruction had o'erwhelmed knower and known
Through the misuse of powers too late sown
To reach fruition safely yet. But now,
Since all things before purity must bow,
New senses will reveal a world of wonders
Undreamed of in the Dark Age, for man ponders
In vain on mysteries beyond his vision
Since Thought e'en fails him without Intuition.
But through this Inner Light the worlds will seem
Within ev'n as without, th' ethereal gleam

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Of starry lightning, penetrating, swift,
Will make the spheres translucent, and the rift
Of man's brief glimpses through the veil of air—
Dazzling as fleeting, and sublime as rare,—
Wider with every new-enlightened one,
Till all at last behold the ever-risen Sun.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

LIGHT.

WE cannot see the Light
For the things it shines on.
Look into the Height—
Clouds are there, snow white;
Or when they're gone
Gaze into the sun—
The deep blue air,
Like a veil is there.
The sun we see itself is not the Light—
Where then is Light ?

Lo, it is everywhere.

We do not see the Truth
For the veils it shines in here;
Yet, in the soul's long youth,
We ne'er could find it near
Save through opinion's veil,
That guards our eyes awhile,
Yet through its mantle frail
Reveals the Spirit's smile.

Light and the things it shineth on are one.
Look forth, and dare
To seek in every form the Light behind it,
And also in thine inmost Self to find it.
All things are One
Within the all-ensphering Spiritual Sun.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC.

O MIGHTY Spirit of all-living Sound,
Enfolding us as with a flood of light
Wherein the hidden springs of life are found,
Where colours almost tremble into sight

Within th' ecstatic and entrancèd mind,
Where wonderful, ethereal forms arise,
Upbuildest tone by tone, whose echoes bind
The perfect figures born in Paradise;

Most like those where white marble columns gleam
Beneath dim vaulted, vast cathedral heights,
In Dawn's clear prism, crystal rays that beam
'Mid speaces lit through soft-hued window-lights.

And where anon swift winding streamlets flash,
And dewdrops sparkle on the starry blooms,
Where tall trees bow beneath the hailstorm's lash,
And whirlwinds follow through the forest glooms.

Ah ! Spirit of living Sound, enfold us still
Ev'n with the Peace of worlds to earth unknown,
So strengthen in us knowledge, wisdom, will,
That we may make thy power to bless—our own.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Ev'n in the hours when Peace abides in silence,
Or when she flies before the world's dull roar,
'Tis granted us to dwell in that great Presence,
And round us yet the streams of healing pour.

For in that flood of Sound we stood united,
Together upward borne on wings of Light,
Inward, on waves of crystal fire, ignited
In union with the Power that giveth Spiritual sight.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

TO WAGNER.

MASTER of Music ! Poet of larger life !—
Unmoved within, amid a world of storm,
Impressing peace upon the outward form,
Transmuting into glory all the strife
Men wrought around thee,—Wagner ! may thy life
Be to the hearts of men a revelation
Of deeper peace and pure, diviner Love,
Attained through self's complete renunciation
And stilling of reaction's oscillation,
Through centering the whole of life above
All dreams of earthly peace and happiness,
In perfect calm of inward harmony,
Deep, unassailable, and limitless,
Unfolding ever, and for ever free.

Ah, we can never, never “ love too much ! ”
If ours be Love indeed, revealed as such
In that no selfish thought can mar its light
For ever shed upon the inward sight.
Oh, may thine influence, may thy spirit's touch
Unveil the eyes of many a blinded soul
Who, to full individual stature come,
Yet fears to merge him in the boundless Whole,
And lingers on the threshold of his Home,
Afraid to enter; fears annihilation
Within the larger life, not yet beholding
How, in the All-pervading, All-enfolding,
He *is* for ever, nor can cease to be
Himself, though vastly greater, wholly free.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

THE WIDER LOVE.

CAN Love—the type of that almighty Power
Which brought the worlds to birth, and from that hour
Upholdeth them in ordered course to move—
Flow on for ever in a narrow groove ?
Nay—can the river rest content to wind
'Mid all the wayward tribes of lower kind,
For ever lone among the swaying reeds,
Low knolls of earth, and clinging water-weeds ?
Ah no, its force must find a way at last
Out to the ocean, and its waters cast
Upon the shining deep, united, free—
One with the fathomless, unbounded sea !
'Tis even so with human love; it must
Break from the gilded bonds that turn to dust,
And as the river must o'erleap its marges,
So Love, enfolding more and more, enlarges
Its sphere of Light's ethereal embrace;
So that at last no form, no time, no space,
No tender beauty of an absent face
Can veil the lovelier soul it partly shows;
No mask of pain, no passion-marrèd feature,
Can alienate from any living creature,—
No thought, of those who know not all it knows,
Nor vain desire that in delusion grows
Until the heart that felt it falls at last
For very weariness—forgets time past—

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Falls freed, though spent and fainting, back to peace,
Where, fading into Love, desire for aye must cease.
One with the Ocean, one with all its waves,
Inseparable from each, so that it craves
No longer for the incomplete reflections,
And still more faint and fruitless recollections
It had perforce to rest upon before,
Must human love escape its earthly shore.
Its individual force becomes not less,
But more and more augments its power to bless,
It never can be lost in nothingness,
Immeasurably greater must it grow
Than any force this world as yet may know,
For ever with the Whole identified,
Nothing from any part can it divide;
Love, entering its boundless heritage,
Sought in the mirror-stream through every age,
Finds power unlimited its own to use,
Since Love Itself led it Itself to choose,
Revealèd more and more through each unveilèd shrine;—
Thus will our human love at last become divine.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

ARMS OF LIGHT.

I ARM my valiant knight
With a panoply of Light
Not wrought by human hands
Nor girt by mortal bands,—
But fashioned by the Power
That gave it for this hour.
For he, my knight, goes forth
To a battle not of earth;
To meet, in realms of Air,
Thoughts, gathered hosts, that wear
Forms of earth's brightest beauty,
Girt with delusive duty.
Mystic, invulnerable,
Must arms be for this fight
With foes so venerable
In worldly human sight.
Swift death itself can stay not,
Nor plague nor famine slay not
Such foes,—in changèd life
Alone can cease their strife—
Passionate, dark, and proud.
And so I wind their shroud—
White flame from Paradise.
And in that shining cloud
Which hides him from mine eyes
Brother—sister-in-arms—
To my true knight am I,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

In Nature's infinite calms
Where no lost shadows die,
But all that once polluted,
To purity transmuted—
Ordered anew—is placed
Where its design is traced.
Where Darkness' self is won
To change its very being,
Its gloom for ever gone,
Its inmost nature seeing,
Enfolded and fulfilled
In Light, its whirlwind stilled,
Its fleeting purpose done,—
With the one Light made one.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

THE " LOVE-CHILD."

THEY call me by the most beautiful name
That ever the world has heard,
And yet I dwell in a house of shame,
Giv'n never a loving word.

My father has never owned me,
My mother wishes me dead,
My portion is the dowry
Of charity's bitter bread.

But I will be true to my name one day,
Though my childhood loveless be,
I'll give my love to the world away,
A child of sympathy.

A sister-in-love to all who grieve,
An elf to fetch and carry,
Pour oil on the wheels that must achieve
Some good that may not tarry.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

TO-DAY'S "MARSEILLAISE."

DAUGHTERS of toil, the world is waking
From oppression's age-long night !
Come forth to meet the dawn that's breaking !
Ye must share true Freedom's light.
And ye in noisome hovels spending
Your life-force for the sweaters' pay,
Scarcely knowing night from day,
Look up, your bitter shame is ending.

Dare to be free ! The Future's yours.
Hope and Faith are open doors !
True hearts, arise, your bondage past,
March on to Liberty !

Come forward, women of all nations,
Under your own souls' command,
Uproot the ancient wrong's foundations,
Hail Freedom's morning hand in hand.
Truth's golden banner waves unfurled,
Arise, for many a barrier still
Shuts out the glory that must fill
All darkened places of the world.

Dare to be free ! The Future's yours.
Faith and Hope are open doors.
True hearts, unite, for Love leads on,
March into Liberty !

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Though darkest be the last dread hour— .

Ye who have faced and slain despair—
Unite, and know theréin your power,

Brief will be the storm we share,
For we are strong in heart and will

To save our children, serve the State,
The stream of Progress stimulate,
And cleanse the springs of social ill.

Dare to be free ! The Future's ours !

Dawn-light pours forth life-bringing showers
True hearts, unite, for love leads on,
We march to Liberty.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

MISUNDERSTOOD !

MISUNDERSTOOD ! How may we speak the woe
Suggested by that single word ? And thou,
Most sensitive of poet-souls, didst know
That misery most intensely. Ah then, how
Could it have been that I too was allied
Awhile with those who thought ill things of thee ?
What evil influence played so on false pride
In this beclouded personal mind, that he
Should be misjudged, for ev'n so short a time,
Whom reverently I love, and truly deem
Worthiest of all who paraphrase in rhyme
The secret truths of Nature, they who dream
The glories of Humanity's full prime
Ev'n in its days of stumbling infancy,
And then project the vision on the screen
Of human thought, portraying the To Be
Ev'n as a model, to our eyes unseen,
But actual in fiery substance ?—Now,
Great Poet of the Future, yet wilt thou
Accept these first-fruits of aspiring thought
That would build forms whereof thy sorrows wrought
The archetypes, from spheres eternal brought ?

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

LOVE UNRETURNED.

My Love !—yes, I dare to say it,—because of my love
you are mine,

Mine even for Love's own sake, and I keep you a shrine
Safe in my heart of hearts, where you ever may dwell,
Whence thoughts float away on the wind when I wish you
well.

You do not love me, so I love you the more, to supply
The positive-negative force which never can die,
But always must mirror the glory of Love upon earth,
Enduring, increasing,—immortal,—from birth unto birth.
And it shall be ever around you, to strengthen and guard,
Beside you, transmuting the chill of the world's regard.
Ah, say not that Love unreturned hath little of glory !

'Tis a gleam from the Great Mother-Heart over life's
earth-story,

Which maketh it one great splendour of Peace divine,
In the crown of the Light everlasting for ever to shine.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

MY BIRTHPLACE.

YE lanes that wind around my childhood's home !

How oft my thoughts like homing birds return
To dwell where first sweet Fancy bade me roam,

And bright Imagination bade me learn
The wonders of great thoughts that inly burn,
Whose golden key she kept for my first powers
Used in her service where soft zephyrs yearn

To warm the Northern winds o'er Hertford's towers,
'Neath love-lent lilac-bloom and apple-blossom showers.

Among the hedgerows that May's pearls enshrined,

Beside the rippling brook that seemed to foam
Like some great river to my baby mind,

Where many an oaf and elf and busy gnome
Dance 'mong the root-filled clods of grassy loam,

Where from the Common road our eyes might meet
Fair Harrow's height—that ever-sacred home.

No golden glory e'er was half so sweet
As that which with the daisies mingled at my feet.

Where pink-sheathed elm-shoots grow in fairy bowers,

Where undisturbèd homes the wild-birds find
And warble joy abroad the livelong hours,

Where white convolvuli the hedgerows bind,
Where silent pools receive the streams that wind

Through verdant meads to rivulets hard by
The trees of Totteridge. Strangely to my mind
Ofttimes the sparrows everywhere would cry
The word " High-Priest"—in sooth I knew not how or why.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

And visions of a garden come to me,
Forget-me-nots and sweet pink currant flowers;
And there a child who played in merry glee
With dear unseen companions all the hours
Of Spring and Summer, in and out the bowers,
And up and down the terrace and the lawn,
Through young Imagination's boundless powers
• Of free enjoyment in their guileless dawn,
But with earth-people shy as a timid baby fawn.

And at the window watched a gentle face,
Pain-worn and sensitive, but strangely calm,
In spiritual strength and peace, and patient grace,
As though her nature held a hidden balm,—
A guardian watcher 'gainst all future harm,
The dear, dear Mother of that gleeful child—
Intent on dangerous paths, without alarm—
Was there to shield by prayer and influence mild,
And sheltered her awhile, by sympathy beguiled.

Another trod those fields and lanes with me,
And taught me Nature's earliest, simplest lore,
One whom for years I understood not—he,
Mistrusted by so many, yet by more
Beloved, than those I trusted fully,—store
Of priceless knowledge gave my memory,
And later, when the mists of fear before
Mine eyes had fled, found me at last set free,
And strengthened me to seek Life's deepest Mystery.

Ah, childhood's days were one enchanted dream,
Not lonely, in that inner world of wonder,
Time's veiled waters lit through many a stream,
Friends of the Past and I were not asunder,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Though forms were blurred and dim, and distant thunder
 The tender voices drowned, th' ethereal reed
Of music heard together where no blunder
 Of earthly wandering parted life or need,—
Dream-lover, Brother, Friend, aye with me then indeed.

I stand in thought beside the brook which forms
 The boundary between *our* native shire
And that where is your home; beyond all storms
 Of changing, troubled waters, all desire,
Beyond the streamers of ethereal fire
 That beacon Northward rosy-white, I look
Toward you on earth, and all the world's great Choir
 Of voices blend beside that shaded brook
So near my home, the first line of my soul-life's book.

I look toward you, and life is all one glory—
 Together always ev'n in those first days,
You ne'er were absent from my heart's true story,
 For in the Light we are two blended rays,
Though channelling that Power through diverse ways.
 Ah ! Dearest, in the deepest Mystery
Uprisen now o'er Form's entangled maze,
 We climb the Formless heights united, free
Still, free for ever, with all hearts one Unity.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

SONNET.

THEY know not Love who falsely dream and say
That Love goes hand in hand with jealousy.
The dear one's light alone can lovers' be,
Should darkness fold him, can his friend know day ?
Or any peace through his contrition see ?
Or any gladness banish from his way ?
Or joyance find if yet he be not free ?
Though " jealousy " to some souls truly may
Mean tireless service, and most " zealous " care
For lover's highest weal, yet 'tis to share
His good, the jealous one desires, I ween,
Nor to behold and join not, bliss, can bear,
But fears lest any shade might fall between.
Can hearts that *love* such apprehension wear ?

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

INDIA !

AH ! Thou wilt link me with the Motherland
Once more ! I cannot choose but come with thee,
Though here. Beside thee on the sacred strand,
Dear Heart !—within thy Being—I shall stand.
One with thee—I must follow, ever free
In Spirit; and the glorious Work is *ours*
Together, in our diverse spheres and powers,
Throughout the ever-consecrated hours.

O steadfast, purest radiance of Duty
Embracèd eagerly ! O Fount of Beauty !
O constant Light of Peace—in Unity !
O Joy ! O Joy ! of holiest Liberty !
O my Belovèd ! I rejoice with thee.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

A DREAM OF OLD SICILY.

THE haunting fragrance of Mimosa blooms,
By gentle fingers set in quiet rooms,
Ever recalls a sweet, pathetic dream
Upborne on slumber's labyrinthine stream
From the far shores of Memory perchance,
Whose whispering zephyrs mortal minds entrance
With loves and heroisms of hearts at rest
On sunlit shores or azure ocean's breast.

'Twas in a garden by Sicilia's shore,
Where silvery streams their mountain waters pour
Down wooded slopes, toward Palerm 's bay,
Where all is colour, riotously gay.
'Mid heavy-laden orange trees and where
Among tall aloes and the prickly pear,
Dark myrtle leaves their starry pearls enfold
Like virgin snow transmuted into gold,
Hang countless feathery morsels driftwise massed,
Scattered on every fragrant breeze that passed
Through the luxuriant tangles of the wood.
In the near meadows dark-eyed maidens stood
Binding the white narcissi into sheaves
With dewy grasses and their guardian leaves,
For their queen's bower beside the tideless wave,
Lovely Bianca, their young widowed queen
Who dwelt in close seclusion there, and gave
Her every thought and hope to things unseen

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

And kindly deeds of gentle charity
Among her people, whose sweet sympathy
All sorrows touched, whose love all griefs would share,
And peace to every mourner sought to bear.

The sailors oft heard music by the sea,
A rich voice mingling with soft minstrelsy
Along those shores. Once with an exiled band
Of warfare's captives from a northern land
A gentle boy the young princess had seen
And for her page besought him, then as queen,
Brought him to Sicily, and he became
Bard-minstrel of her court,—Jacoff his name.

Near manhood was he now, growing in mind
Beyond his elders, rare of speech, refined
In form and features, gravity akin
To sadness wearing oft. He sought to win
A mystic solace for the widowed queen
Through music well attunèd to her mood.
Thus, with her maids, she dwelt in solitude,
Though many a royal suitor there had been
To woo her back within the world's glad stream.
To Jacoff too was love at last made known,
All unrequited, with his being grown,
Yet unawares, till consciously supreme.

Half slumb'ring one hot eventide he lay
Hid by dark leaves and fall'n Mimosa bloom
Shedding a golden glory on his curls
And rose-pink coat, his lute clasped in his hands,
His fingers lightly sleeping on the strings.
A troubled dream had stirred and waked his soul,
When whispering voices smote upon his ears.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Peering between the leaves, he saw two men
Pacing the alley, with dark looks downcast.
He thought, meseems they speak of wrath and wrong,
I fear their colloquy some ill portends.
Suddenly looking up one said aloud:
“ Doubt not—I swear, before daylight returns,
Bianca's crown, Naples and Sicily,
Shall be my own. Fail not—thou knowest the hour,
Before th' Osteria gate—Till then, farewell.”
“ Ha, 'tis Cabrera bold, the Catalan lord
Who to Bianca's hand aspires !”—Jacoff,
Awake indeed, sprang through the trees: “ Hers—thine
Intriguing wretch ! Wouldst thou force thy base self
Upon a widowed queen's desired retreat ?”
“ How now ! What spiteful kitten have we here
That shows its weakling claws so foolishly ?”
Cabrera cried with hand on his sword-hilt:
“ Villain ! Thou shalt not pass to carry out
Thy vile intent save o'er my lifeless corse !”
Jacoff returned in scorn. Cabrera sneered:
“ A mighty obstacle 'twill be in truth !”
“ My lord,” his dark companion whispered low,
“ Minstrels must not be missed, to set afoot
A search that might find out our ambushed men !”
Cabrera nodded, then to Jacoff said:
“ There is no need of this defiance, boy,
She whom thou wouldst defend doth need it not,
The queen is dead, and I do claim her throne.”
Jacoff turned, mutely dazed, and blindly ran
Athwart the fair herbaceous waving fields,
Adown long labyrinths of roses twined,
Across a spacious courtyard, marble-paved,

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Straight as a dart swift to the palace gate,
Repeating as he ran: "The queen is dead—
What purpose now hath Jacoff's life to serve?"
The world had grown so dark before his eyes
He did not see a form of royal mien,
Pacing the marble, till she stayed his flight,
With gentle fingers laid upon his arm.
Her liquid, lucent eyes, so starry clear,
With such a look of sorrow-tempered thought,
Sweet patience, chastened love personified,
Rested upon him, softly questioning.
So young, so fair, how could bereavement leave
So beautiful a being desolate?
"The phantom of our queen hath come to me,
To bid me serve her ev'n in death!" he cried,
Kneeling before her feet in ecstasy.
"Nay, Jacoff, 'tis no wraith! 'Tis I," she said.
Questioning still he looked, then cried: "The queen!
The Catalan spoke falsely! List, O queen—
If thou thyself wouldst still be, soon as night
Darkens and deepens, thou must fly this place!
Cabrera means to enter ev'n by force,—
Our men are few, thou know'st, against his strength.
A galley from Sareno I will fetch
To take thee through the covering darkness there."
Swift he was gone, his lute dropped to the ground.
The stables reached, he mounted saddleless,
The first good steed he saw, and galloped forth
Down to the sun-scorched road, and seaward flew
Like the light wind that lifted his bright hair.
So through the sultry southern eventide
The "fair-haired northern child" dashed like the foam

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Of his loved early home's half-frozen seas.
The sun grows greater as he nears the deep !—
Stay ! King of light, until our queen be saved !
And thou, still wind, with thy strong breath assist
Her frail deliverer ! Faster—faster fly,
Brave steed !—Ah, can he win this desperate race
'Gainst time and daylight ?—Hark ! a shot rang out,
Parting the startled air ! A horseman spurred—
Cabrera's dark companion—in pursuit.
His aim had ne'er been known to fail ! Jacoff,
One hand pressed to his side, flew faster yet,
Pale, pale as death, his frozen lips set tight,
His bright eyes fixed. And now before him rose
The lofty snow-white turrets all o'erlaid
With gold and rose-hues from the low sun's rays.
He neared the heavy portal—his pursuer
Had not yet gained one foot on him,—but ah !
Would Jacoff living to the queen return ?
He seemed some sculptured equestrian
Of pure white marble,—white his clothes, his horse,
With the fine dust that round him as a cloud
Enfolded, like great shadowy wings, his flight.
But his pursuer thundered at the gate
Only to hear the dark portcullis clang
Triumphantly behind the messengér.
The chafing Catalan ground his teeth with rage:
“ The devil was in the boy ! My aim was true !
I doubt if he have strength to tell his tale.”

The ship was manned beside Sareno's wall.
“ Go, fetch the queen !” the Governor gave command,
“ This brave youth bear to our skilled sisters' care.”

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

But Jacoff cried: " Nay, bear me to the queen !
I sware that I myself would bring her here."

Knee-deep in white-winged waves Bianca stood
With her affrighted maids, fled kitten-like
At sound of bold Cabrera's battering storm.
With prayerful lips she scanned the sailless deep,
Till gliding silently the galley came,
Lowering its little boat, which, like a bird
Swift-pinioned, bare her with them to the deck,—
Jacoff's the hand outstretched to aid her steps.
And to her lily fingers reverently
He pressed his marble lips, then closed his eyes—
The queen was safe and free upon the waves.
His task fulfilled, his life, complete, was done.
And in Bianca's gentle heart was kept
A shrine for him, Jacoff the messenger.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIMS' WAY

THE UNWALLED TEMPLE.

AMIDST a mountain wilderness we dwell,
 Remote from any consecrated fane,
Beside the bulwark of the hills we fell
 Athwart life's river breasting o'er the plain.

But here we find the temple of the Lord,
 Not formed of hewn-out stone, by earthly hand,
And here for us vibrates the full-toned chord
 Echoed on whirlwind strings from every land.

A temple paved with earth's most stable things,
 Great rocks age-old, mosaics born anew,—
Lichens, and rainbow gems with blossom wings,
 Fashioned of mystic light, ether and dew.

Walled by the mountains, pillared by tall trees,
 Its doors, intangible, dissolving clouds,
The thoughts of childlike hearts their only keys,
 Its choirs arrayed in crystal snow's life-shrouds.

Their psalmody, each perfect growth achieved,
 All incense-wreathing mist, each chant of bird,
Roofed by the fathomless, the unconceived,
 And lighted by the symbol of the Word.

LEAVES FROM THE PILGRIM'S WAY

Here all earth's colours mingle, flame and shine,
Blended with emerald light in harmony,
Which through immortal sympathy combine,—
One Love diversified, through all we see.

And everywhere the working of the Law,
Sacrifice, through many an age fulfilled,
Present, though every shrine on earth withdraw,
A Voice, though every melody be stilled.

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